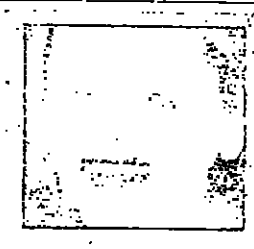


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SATURDAY

30 DECEMBER 1995



# INDEPENDENT

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Labour accuses Major after tycoon who lent cash to party is honoured

## Fury over 'cash for knighthood'

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES  
Political Correspondent

John Major was facing a political furor over his New Year's Honours list today after the millionaire tycoon who lent the Tory party £4m was listed among the knights.

Graham Kirkham, chief of the DFS furniture chain, also took £5,533,637 of his £10m salary for the year ending August 1995 in antiques and works of art, so that the company saved £500,000 in employees' National Insurance.

Today's knighthood comes in recognition of Sir Graham's charitable services to the Duke of Edinburgh's award and the Animal Health Trust, but was immediately condemned by Labour who claimed it was the crudest instance yet of using the honours system to reward generosity to the Tory party.

John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader, said: "Whatever the official reason, this seems like the crudest example yet of honours being given for financial services received by the Tory party."

From starting work as a Doncaster furniture shop salesman more than 35 years ago, Sir Graham has gone on to become one of the top 50 richest men in Britain.

His entrepreneurial talents all through the Thatcher years led him to amass a multi-million pound personal fortune from which he was able to lend a cash-strapped Conservative Central Office a £4m three-month loan in January after John Major came to power, and his Yorkshire estate where he houses his art treasures.

With all interest on the money going permanently to the party, the gesture was one of the largest personal contributions ever made to a British political party. It came at a time when



Sir Graham Kirkham: loaned cash-strapped Tories £4m

have been nominated by the party.

"The citation [in the Honours list] is quite clear," a Downing Street source said. "He was not given this award for political services. He was given it for charitable services."

The row is an embarrassment to the Prime Minister in the wake of his efforts over recent years to create a more "classless" honours system that reflected a wider spectrum of society and gave more recognition to community work.

Approaching 40 per cent of this year's list, from holders of the humble MBE up to knights, had received the backing of members of the public writing into Downing Street.

Although Number 10 declined to be drawn on how many honours resulted solely from public nominations, it said that about 400 names on the Prime Minister's 1,036-strong list had been picked specifically for voluntary and community service.

However, Mr Prescott said: "So much for John Major's claim that his honours system was for the ordinary man. Frankly, this award must be the cause of some serious concern."

Labour stuck to its long-standing convention of not putting forward political nominations for honours, and a spokeswoman said yesterday that that stance would continue under a Labour government.

The affair is bound to revive complaints over Conservative-sympathising businessmen apparently being rewarded with honours for making donations to the party's funds. It will also refuel calls for Lord Nolan's Committee on Standards in Public Life to undertake a thorough examination of party political funding.



Star turn: The former Coronation Street actress Julie Goodyear celebrating her MBE yesterday Photograph: Bob Collier

## 'Happy Goodyear' tops the pops

REBECCA FOWLER

New Year honours are bestowed today on the former Coronation Street actress Julie Goodyear, the agony aunt Clare Rayner and the Liverpool footballer Ian Rush in one of the most popular selections in memory.

Ms Goodyear, who recently resigned as landlady of the Rovers Return, was celebrating her appointment as an MBE with pink champagne yesterday at her local hotel near Rochdale, after arriving in a gold Rolls-Royce and buying drinks for the house. "This is one of the most memorable and proudest moments of my life,"

she said. "I am a very happy Goodyear."

Rush, 34, one of 10 children from Flint, North Wales, said of his MBE: "It's a great feeling for both myself and my family... It's a great start to the new year... This gives me an extra boost and incentive."

Colleagues from the world of sport who also receive awards include Shaun Edwards, the England rugby league captain (OBE), Jonathan Edwards, the world triple-jump record-holder who will receive an MBE, and Bernard Gallacher, the golfer, also appointed an OBE. "It's been a tremendous year for me, the team and European golf in general, and I'd like to think this

honour reflects that," he said. Beryl Cook, famous for her paintings of fat ladies in stockings, is appointed an OBE. Clare Rayner gets an MBE and the pop singer Elton John becomes a CBE.

Chris Bonington, 61, the mountaineer, is given a knighthood, as is the impresario Cameron Mackintosh and Stanley Kalns, head of the Disons store chain. "I'm delighted, he who waits gets his reward," said Sir Stanley, 64, who started work at 16 when he took charge of his father's photographic shop in London. "This gives me new energy to carry on."

The armed forces are acknowledged, with a knighthood

for Lt-Gen Rupert Smith, the former United Nations commander in Bosnia, and a host of awards for organisers of VE Day celebrations in May.

According to Downing Street, 40 per cent of the list was nominated by the public across all levels from MBEs to knights, and 400 awards were made specifically for voluntary work. One-third of the awards have been given to women.

## Ten are stabbed in supermarket attack

IAN MACKINNON

Police were last night questioning a 34-year-old supermarket worker after he ran amok in the aisles of the store with three knives, and stabbed 10 people.

The man, who had just started his shift as a part-time shelf-stacker at the south Birmingham store, was chased from the premises by a security guard and the father of a 13-year-old boy injured in the chaos. But as they confronted the Asian shop assistant near the shop in Bordesley Green, two police officers disarmed him using batons.

Five people, four of them with serious injuries, were last night being detained at two city hospitals after undergoing surgery.

The attack comes almost exactly a year after another man, David Morgan, went on the rampage with a knife in a Birmingham department store, wounding 10 women.

It also follows heightened concern over criminals' use of knives after the murder of Philip Lawrence, the headmaster stabbed to death while going to the aid of a pupil outside his north London school on 8 December.

Outrage over the murder prompted the 43 police forces in England and Wales to declare a month-long amnesty for those surrendering knives to police stations.

It was unclear where yesterday's attacker had obtained his weapons - a four-inch Bowie knife, a Swiss Army knife and a Stanley knife - which were recovered by police as he was seized. Only two of the knives were used in the attack at the Netto supermarket which flared shortly after 12.15pm as the man began packing shelves at the store where he had worked for 10 months.

Chief Inspector Eric Noble, leading the inquiry, said that the violence was sparked by a row between the man and his colleagues, though shoppers became involved.

Moments later the man went berserk, walking through the crowded store with his arms above his head, holding the knives aloft.

Screaming shoppers ran for cover as he walked along the aisles stabbing at people in his path.

One of the victims, Mark Edwards, 15, from King's Heath, Birmingham, speaking from his hospital bed as he recovered

from a back wound, told how he had gone into the store with his parents and 9-year-old sister Elizabeth.

"I could hear a commotion and I thought it was a shoplifter," he said. "Everyone started to head towards the exit and then I saw a man running down with two knives in his hands."

"He was just jabbing and stabbing with the knives as he came by. My sister was standing still and he was going towards her. So I grabbed her and just pushed her through the exit. I turned round to go out myself and then felt like I had been

punched in the back." Only outside did his father see the blood and drive him to hospital.

In all six men, one aged 65, two women, and two boys of 13 and 15 were injured. A 41-year-old shop assistant with three stab wounds, two to her back and one to her arm, was flown by helicopter to Selly Oak hospital in the city and said last night to be stable.

The other victims were taken to Heartland's hospital where three were found to have serious injuries. A man of 35 and a woman of forty both had chest wounds, while a man of 65 suffered stomach injuries.

### IN BRIEF

#### Woman's body found

Detectives searching for a missing French student were planning to travel to Worcester last night to examine a body found in a lay-by. Page 2

#### Football threat fails

First Division clubs failed to carry out a threatened mass walk-out from the Football League after failing to win a greater say in league affairs. Page 23

#### Pornography crackdown

A global crackdown on pornography on the Internet looks likely, after a firm cut off 4 million people's access to sex-oriented "newsgrups". Page 4

## Fresh snowfalls to sweep in from Atlantic

LOUISE JURY

Fresh snowfalls sweeping in from the Atlantic are set to bring a bitter chill to large swathes of Britain today.

But while meteorological organisations were warning drivers to think twice about their travel plans, airports were preparing for an exodus by thousands of travellers escaping the cold.

After one of the coldest Christmases on record, the London Weather Centre said little of Britain was likely to escape snow or sleet today. Rain falling on the tip of

Cornwall turned to snow yesterday afternoon as the cold front moved northwards through the South-west, South-east and Wales.

Bitter south-easterly winds were set to make it a raw holiday Saturday with the wind-chill factor leaving the country feeling 10 degrees colder than real temperatures.

However, a London Weather Centre spokeswoman said a warmer southerly wind would bring milder conditions to the majority of England by tomorrow although there would be fresh snow falls in Scotland.

By New Year's Day temperatures, which have hovered at zero over the holiday period, are set to rise to 10C in the far west of England, 5-7C for mid-England and 3C in the North. Scotland will remain cold.

Glasgow airport was the coldest place in Britain at minus 18.7C yesterday, only marginally warmer than its worst ever night earlier this week. The Shetland Isles, where a mild thaw began yesterday, could suffer fresh blizzards.

The AA motoring organisation said it was working flat-out to tackle problems, mainly flat

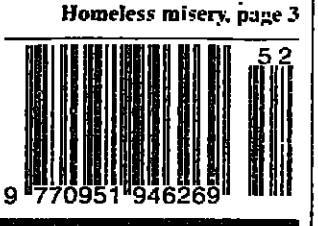
batteries and frozen engines. Thursday was its second busiest day on record, and it has dealt with 66,000 calls in the last three days compared with a typical 13,000 a day. Most main routes were clear, although black ice was a risk.

Travel by rail has been largely unaffected by the weather apart from Scotland where ScotRail has suffered serious disruption and 160 "snow men" have been out checking points are not frozen over.

Airports expect a record New Year with few problems. More than 425,000 passengers are

set to fly from Heathrow between New Year's Eve and 2 January, joining a seasonal exodus 4 per cent higher than last year. Around 1.75 million have flown since 21 December. More than 700,000 passengers have passed through Gatwick over the holiday.

Homeless misery, page 3



## Send a baby box to Bosnia this Winter

Disinfectant, nappies, washing materials - not what you'd think of giving someone. But for a desperate mother in Bosnia trying to keep her child safe from infection, the basic essentials inside one of our baby boxes would mean the world.

Feed the Children will deliver your box directly into the hands of mothers in Bosnia - many of whom will be sheltering in freezing schools, factories, and bombed-out houses this Winter.

Please send a baby box to Bosnia this Winter - help a mother keep her baby safe.

## With love from a friend...

Call 0990 600610 now to tell us how many baby boxes you would like to send. OR please complete and return this form.

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ baby boxes at £30 each on my behalf. I enclose a cheque for £\_\_\_\_\_ (total amount) made payable to: Feed the Children

OR please debit £\_\_\_\_\_ from my ☐ Visa ☐ Access ☐ Switch

Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Last three digits of Switch card no. \_\_\_\_\_ Switch issue no. \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name (caps) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to send a message to a Serbian mother, please send it with your donation and we will put it in your baby box. Please send to: Feed the Children, Dept 419, FREEPOST, Reading, RG1 1BB



# Kashmir hostages 'are still alive'

MUKHTAR AHMED  
Srinagar

Four Western tourists who have been held hostage by Muslim militants in Kashmir for nearly six months are alive and were seen by villagers in South Kashmir two days before Christmas, according to police sources in the Indian-controlled territory.

The four, including two Britons, Keith Mangan and Paul Wells, were spotted wearing Kashmiri robes at the village

of Hakura Bursgam in the southern Anantnag district on 25 December. "They were in good health. This is good news, as we were concerned about their fate," a police source said. "We heaved a sigh of relief."

Fears for the safety of the hostages, who were captured by the Al-Faraj militant group while hiking in the foothills of the Himalayas, rose after a gun battle on 4 December in which four leading members of Al-Faraj, including its chief commander, Abdul Hamid Turki,

were killed by Indian forces. Al-Faraj later claimed that three of the tourists were "taken away" by the Indian army and that the fourth was "missing".

For most of the past six months the Indian authorities have been aware of the general whereabouts of the Western hostages, but have avoided any rescue attempt that might have resulted in their deaths. The Indians admit that Al-Faraj managed to smuggle the captives away after the gun battle. Last weekend's sighting was the first

confirmation that they were still alive. Police sources said that strict instructions had been issued to the security forces not to engage the abductors in any further encounters.

The police sources added that a new band of heavily-armed Al-Faraj members, led by a foreign militant named Mohammad Ali, is now guarding the four tourists. The group has hi-tech field radio sets, but is much smaller than before; more than 100 captors had previously accompanied the

hostages, but villagers saw only 30 to 40 at Hakura Bursgam.

The seizure of foreign hostages has divided the militants fighting New Delhi's control of Kashmir, the only Muslim-majority state in India. Mainstream groups have called on Al-Faraj, a previously little-known movement which India claims is controlled and financed by Pakistan, to free the four Westerners.

"Al-Faraj is becoming isolated from other groups in Kashmir over the continued

captivity of the four tourists," said one official. "We have reports that they want to release them unharmed soon. We will redouble our efforts to seek their early release."

Other sources admitted, however, that despite its best efforts, the government has failed to establish direct or indirect contact with Al-Faraj. During the last negotiations, the abductors demanded the release of 15 jailed militants, including two senior commanders held in a New Delhi jail, but the Indian

government refuses to make any concessions.

British, American and German diplomats waiting in Srinagar have had no recent contact with Al-Faraj, according to officials. "They tried through various influential locals, but without success," said one diplomat. "We have no information about the Christmas gifts and greeting cards sent to the tourists. We had lost track of them. But now the good news is that they are safe, and still with Al-Faraj."

## IN BRIEF

### Man held on Italian murder charge

An Italian who has lived for the past two years in Surrey is awaiting extradition for a murder committed nearly two decades ago.

The trail to Enrico Mariotti, 55, of Wallington, Surrey, ended when he was arrested at Gatwick airport on Christmas Eve after he dropped off his wife to catch a flight to Rome. Sentenced to 25 years' jail in Italy in his absence, he has been remanded until 3 January for involvement in the murder of Count Massimiliano Grazzoli between November 1977 and March 1978.

Mariotti allegedly befriended the 66-year-old count, and then used the friendship to arrange for the kidnapping of the aristocrat with a local gang boss. The family handed over a ransom of £750,000, but the count was never seen again and Mariotti was later named as the killer and fled.

### Spring joins attack

Dick Spring, Ireland's deputy prime minister and foreign minister, joined calls for Sinn Féin to condemn terrorist-linked killings in Belfast. He said the recent shootings - claimed to have been carried out by an anti-drugs group with IRA connections - were "a worrying feature in the whole context of the Northern Ireland peace process".

### Fears for girl, 18

Police stepped up their search for Louise Smith, 18, missing since leaving a party in Yate, Somerset, early on Christmas Day. A former boyfriend said he thought he saw her getting into a blue Ford Fiesta car driven by a girlfriend but no trace has been found of the car or driver.

### Woman's beating

Detectives investigating the attempted murder of a woman who ran an escort agency from her home appealed for information about a man seen running across gardens and discarding clothing. Ann Fidler, 43, was given a 50-50 chance of survival, 48 hours after being beaten in her house at Eastleigh, Hampshire.

### Pub bomb find

An incendiary bomb was found in a pub close to the centre of Belfast. The device, found in a cigarette packet under a carpet, had failed to go off.

## Hotel lounge explosion injures drinkers

Five people were taken to hospital yesterday after an explosion ripped through a hotel.

The blast happened at the Braerich Hotel, Newtonmore, in the Scottish Highlands, early yesterday afternoon, and is thought to have destroyed the lounge bar, where several people were drinking.

Northern Constabulary said one casualty was airlifted by an ambulance helicopter to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Another four people were taken in a fleet of ambulances by road to the same hospital. A police spokesman said that it was still too early to assess the extent of the injuries.

One woman who works in the Mains Hotel, close to the Braerich, said: "It must have been a huge explosion because all the windows have been blown out and there is a real mess on the street."

There were fire engines and ambulances everywhere. I think some people were badly hurt because the helicopter took them away. The traffic is being diverted away from the street."

Highlands and Islands Fire Brigade said that two units and a voluntary team from Newtonmore had attended the scene and had tackled a "minor" fire which broke out after the explosion.

It is thought that the blast may have been caused by a heating boiler, but police said it was too early to identify the source.

The police spokesman said: "The cause of the explosion is still not clear, but would appear to involve the boiler."

Newtonmore, off the A9 south of Inverness, is a popular town with New Year revellers. Local people said the Braerich was one of the main hotels in the area.

Police said later there had been five people injured, not nine as previously believed. The man flown from the scene to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, was also described as stable and comfortable.



Blast scene: Firefighters at the hotel in the Highlands where an explosion injured five people yesterday

Photograph: Gordon Lennox

## Body in lay-by may be missing Celine

MATTHEW BRACE

Detectives hunting for the missing French student Celine Figard were planning to travel to Worcester last night to examine the body of a young woman found in a lay-by.

The woman, thought to be in her early twenties, was found by a motorist at Hawford on the A449 near Worcester, West Mercia police said.

A spokesman confirmed that the body was naked and no clothes had been discovered near by, although he said it was too early to say how long the body had lain in the wooded area near the lay-by, or how the woman had died.

"We are still trying to establish the identity of the dead woman," he said. "We're treating this as a suspicious death, although it's a murder-scale inquiry."

A Home Office pathologist was due to conduct a post-mortem examination last night.

More than 100 detectives have been searching for the 19-year-old French accountancy student who disappeared at a motorway service station on the M4 in Berkshire 10 days ago.

She had been travelling to spend Christmas with her cousin, who works at a hotel in Fordingbridge, Hampshire. She was last seen accepting a lift from a lorry driver who, despite repeated public appeals for information, has still not been traced.

Earlier this week her father, Bernard, a 44-year-old farmer, travelled from his home in Ferrières-Les-Bois, south-east of Paris, to make an emotional appeal for help in finding his daughter.

A spokesman for Hampshire police said yesterday: "West Mercia police have been in touch and we are trying to establish whether the body is that of Celine."

He added there was nothing yet to indicate whether the dead woman was Celine or not.

## Blair plans 'meet the people' tours

DONALD MACINTYRE  
Political Editor

Tony Blair, planning to embark on a wide-ranging series of "meet the people" tours after the New Year, yesterday promised that Labour would be ready to fight - and if possible precipitate - a general election in 1996.

The Labour leader made it clear that the party would be preparing for an election this year because it was difficult to see how the Government - which faces a likely majority of just three after two forthcoming by-elections - could continue. He added in an ITN interview: "If we can bring about a situation in which we

can bring the Government down, and the country can decide whether it wants a new direction, then of course we will take it," he said.

Mr Blair's remarks came as he issued a New Year message promising that the Labour front bench would be taking the party's policy agenda "to every part of the country so that the people may test us, so that their views can inform ours, and inform the policy ideas we develop and promote."

The Labour leader is planning to meet the public as he did party members during the campaign to change Channel 4 curfew in the year and he has subsequently met thousands of leading businessmen in en-



Tony Blair: ready for polls

counters designed to remove their potential fears of a Labour victory.

The programme is expected to start with meetings of parents and teachers intended to explain

Labour's education policy. But it is likely to be extended to other areas as well.

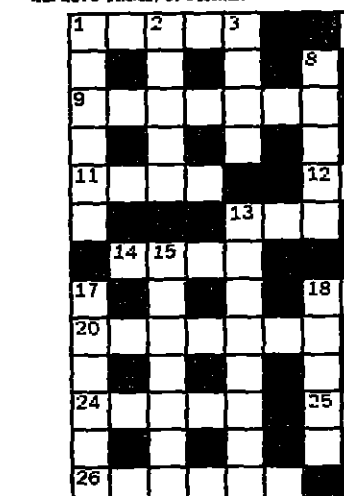
Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, also plans to take his message to the people via a nation-wide tour starting early in the New Year.

His New Year message Mr Blair asserted that Labour wanted to "move beyond" the achievements of 1995 in which the party had "built up a relationship of trust with the people" by forming a "genuine partnership with the people". He said: "We have developed a distinctive, new and radical political agenda for Britain which breaks through traditional dividing lines of left and right."

Meanwhile in his New Year

## concise crossword

No. 2878 Saturday 30 December

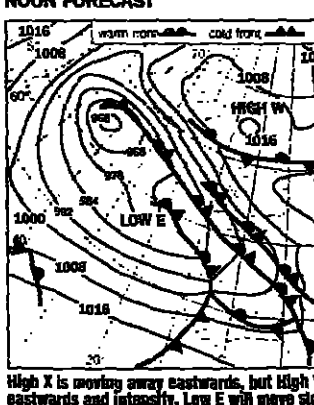


- ACROSS**
- Crane (5)
  - OT book (6)
  - From Thailand (7)
  - Sudden increase (5)
  - Resound (4)
  - List (7)
  - Office (3)
  - Occur (4)
  - Hunt out (4)
  - Chester's river (3)
  - Determination (7)
  - Relaxation (4)
  - Oliver's surname (5)
  - Triumph (7)
  - College (6)
  - Begetting of a city (5)
- DOWN**
- Very thin (6)
  - Welsh town (5)
  - See 13 down
  - Apprehension (8)
  - Brave girl (7)
  - Stank (6)
  - Start (5)
  - and 3 Pointed part of shoe
  - Jesus (7)
  - Free (6)
  - Dig deeply (5)
  - Correct a letter? (6)
  - Made expedition (5)
  - Cold desserts (4)

**Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:**  
Across: 1 Bole, 4 Eaves (Bay leaves), 9 Price, 10 Pack ice, 11 Electric, 12 Fiat, 13 Handcuffed, 17 Clip, 18 Occasion, 21 Sleight, 22 Taste, 23 Earn, 24 Crew, Down: 2 Agile, 3 Everlet, 4 Esprit de corps, 5 Vice, 6 Sailing, 7 Speech, 8 Beat, 14 Naivete, 15 Elastic, 16 Tandem, 17 Case, 19 Issue, 20 Spur

## weather

### NOON FORECAST



High X is moving away eastwards, but High W will drift south-eastwards and intensify. Low E will move slowly northwards.

### WORLD WEATHER

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	Madrid	10-12	W 10-15	Partly
Birmingham	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Paris	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Manchester	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	Rome	12-14	W 10-15	Partly
Newcastle	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Brussels	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Glasgow	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	Amsterdam	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Belfast	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Frankfurt	12-14	W 10-15	Partly

### TODAY'S FORECAST

Today will see a continuation of the cold but mostly sunny weather in Scotland. Meanwhile, a belt of snow and strong winds will be moving north across the rest of Britain. However, the snow is expected to gradually turn to rain in the south. Tonight, the snow and strong winds will continue across the north and west, but with mist and drizzle in the south. The south is expected to have lighter showers and a few showers in the north.

### OUTLOOK FOR THE NEXT FEW DAYS

The snow and strong winds will be affecting the northern half of Britain during New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The south should have mild weather with some rain. The south is expected to have mild weather with some rain.

### INDEPENDENT WEATHER

Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Area	Temp	Wind	Cloud
London	12-14	W 10-15	Partly	Madrid	10-12	W 10-15	Partly
Birmingham	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Paris	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Manchester	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	Rome	12-14	W 10-15	Partly
Newcastle	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Brussels	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Glasgow	10-12	W 10-15	Partly	Amsterdam	11-13	W 10-15	Partly
Belfast	11-13	W 10-15	Partly	Frankfurt	12-14	W 10-15	Partly

## Prison doctors allowed to issue free condoms

DANNY PENMAN

The Prison Service has decided that condoms can be issued to convicts to try to combat the spread of HIV and Aids, according to a confidential letter seen by the Independent.

Successive Conservative governments have expressed the distribution of condoms for fear of appearing to endorse homosexual activity, but the letter, from Rosemary Woolf, Director of Health Care for the Prison Medical Service, to prison doctors, appears to contradict earlier policy.

Ms Woolf urges doctors to prescribe condoms to any person they feel is at risk of catching HIV. In practice this means that any prisoners engaging in homosexual sex can be given free condoms.

Ms Woolf says in the letter that "prison doctors are free, in

the exercise of their clinical judgement, to prescribe condoms for individual prisoners."

A spokesman for the Prison Service declined to comment on any change of policy. "Boxes of condoms are not going to be dumped on each wing, and there's not going to be a free-for-all," he said.

The shift in policy was welcomed yesterday by gay rights groups, prison reform organisations and Labour and Conservative MPs.

Stephen Shaw, spokesman for the Prison Reform Trust, described it as "marvellous news". He said: "This allows prisoners the same level of protection that the Government has spent millions of pounds trying to persuade the rest of the population to take."

Sir Ivan Lawrence, the Conservative chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee, said:

"You could end up with a situation where Aids is not being taken care of properly."

Jack Straw, shadow Home Secretary, said the move was justified "on the grounds of public health".

The Government has previously opposed the advice given by doctors and members of the prison service. The policy shift has apparently been allowed following fresh legal advice.

The 1967 Sexual Offences Act prohibits homosexual activity in a public place. The Home Office has always maintained that a prison cell is a public place. Mr Woolf says in the letter: "The burden of our legal advice is in fact that there may be a legal risk in not providing condoms... through a failure in the duty of care."

## Nolan may investigate watchdogs

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES  
Political Correspondent

Privatised industry regulators may be the next target for the Committee on Standards in Public Life, its chairman Lord Nolan said yesterday.

The committee will consider whether to mount the investigation after it has concluded its current inquiry into local public spending bodies. "We very well may, I wouldn't like to go further at the moment," Lord Nolan said.

He added that the regulators

would be within the terms of reference of his committee.

Calls for an investigation came in the wake of the row over Peter Davis, the National Lottery regulator, who was attacked for accepting free flights from a major backer of the lottery operator Camelot against advice from the Department of National Heritage.

Interviewed on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, Lord Nolan said: "The suggestion has been made over the current case that it would be sensible to see in more detail what regulates

the regulators and to whom they are accountable."

"I've no doubt we will be considering whether we should at look the subject."

A source close to the committee confirmed it would stick to its convention of not revisiting individual cases, but there were issues for examination.

"These would be likely to include the degree of accountability between the watchdogs and the Government, and the kinds of action available when a regulator strayed beyond the bounds of proper conduct."



## Death on the lake: As the freeze shows no sign of abating, fireman's widow tells of the heroism that ended in tragedy

### Wife pays tribute to a brave man who died helping others

WILL BENNETT

The widow of Michael Mee, the off-duty fireman who died while trying to rescue a girl from a frozen lake, yesterday described her horror as she watched him disappear under the icy waters.

Elizabeth Mee said her husband was "a wonderful, brave man who devoted his life to helping others". The couple were walking with their daughter, Katy, when the tragedy occurred at Hemsworth Water Park, Kinsley, West Yorkshire, on Thursday.

Mee, 48, fellow rescuer Jack

Mrs Mee, 46, said her husband, who had been a fireman for 26 years, ran to help as soon as he realised that somebody had fallen into the water.

She said: "He sprinted round the lake, telling me and Katy to dial 999. The next thing I knew, Mike was on the ice trying to reach the little girl. At about the same time Crawshaw also plunged into the lake to try to save Tracey."

"Katy and I ran up and just kept shouting to Mike to try and support him, but he didn't have a chance. He had nothing to get hold of," said Mrs Mee, who also has a 17-year-old son, Christopher.

"The girl and the other man went underneath first, and then Mike disappeared. After that everything seems blurred. They



Tribute: Carly Glover, left, lays flowers and a teddy in memory of classmate Tracey, right

were all gone by the time the firemen arrived," Katy, a student at Durham University, said. "I have lost a brave and wonderful father."

Both Mee, from South Hiendley, near Barnsley, and Crawshaw may be recommended for posthumous gallantry awards by West Yorkshire

Police, although a spokesman said yesterday that no definite decision had yet been made. Both the Government and the Royal Humane Society could

award medals for the rescue attempt.

Crawshaw, a bachelor, lived with his brother, Ian, in Wrenthorpe, Wakefield, and used to run a corner shop which adjoined their house. Ian said: "I am terribly upset. I have been up all night. I just cannot believe it. I am proud of my brother and what he did. I don't think of him as a hero, he was just the type of person who would do what was expected."

Gareth Easton, 11, a schoolfriend of Tracey's, said: "It doesn't surprise me she went after the dog. She just would not have been able to watch it drown because she adored them. What surprised me was how easily she was able to get into the water. You think they would have fences up."

His sister Sheryl, 17, who used to help Tracey with her homework when she brought it back from West End Middle School in Hemsworth, added: "There should be wiring all the way round that lake. I am not surprised this has happened."

"There is so much vandalism round there it is dangerous. When winter comes they should put fences round the place and close it down because this was a tragedy that was just waiting to happen."

Meanwhile, council officials revealed that as the tragedy unfolded, youngsters risked their lives by playing on another frozen lake a short distance away. Staff pleaded with them to get off the dangerously thin ice, but they refused.

Chris Geecon, clerk to Hemsworth council, which is reviewing safety measures at the park, said: "While they were dragging bodies out of the big lake, kids were on the ice on the smaller lake."

"They must have known what had happened but, when they were asked to keep off the ice, we just got abuse from them. It's very difficult to stop them."

"This is a first-class leisure facility that attracts around 75,000 people a year and we are constantly reviewing our safety policies. There are already plenty of signs up with lots of 'Don'ts' on them and quite frankly while the majority of people adhere to them a small minority don't. It's very difficult to stop that."

Leading article, page 12

## Crisis as homeless sent back on streets

NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Four hundred homeless people will today leave London's emergency Christmas shelter despite the continuing bitter cold. The homeless charity Crisis said the shelter had to close, but the Government agreed to fund an extra 100 places until Tuesday.

At the same time Lothian social services opened an extra 13 beds in Edinburgh following the death on Wednesday of John Murphy, 54, a homeless man.

The Department of the Environment's action came as Crisis said that 400 people a night had slept at its emergency shelter in Wandsworth, south-west London, since it opened two days before Christmas and as the Resource Information Service, which co-ordinates hostel places in the capital, said that demand for beds had been "very high".

Crisis said that its Christmas shelter had to close because it was staffed entirely by volunteers. "They have to go back to work and it is just not feasible to keep it open," a spokeswoman said. Of those who have used the shelter, perhaps 200 were literally homeless and

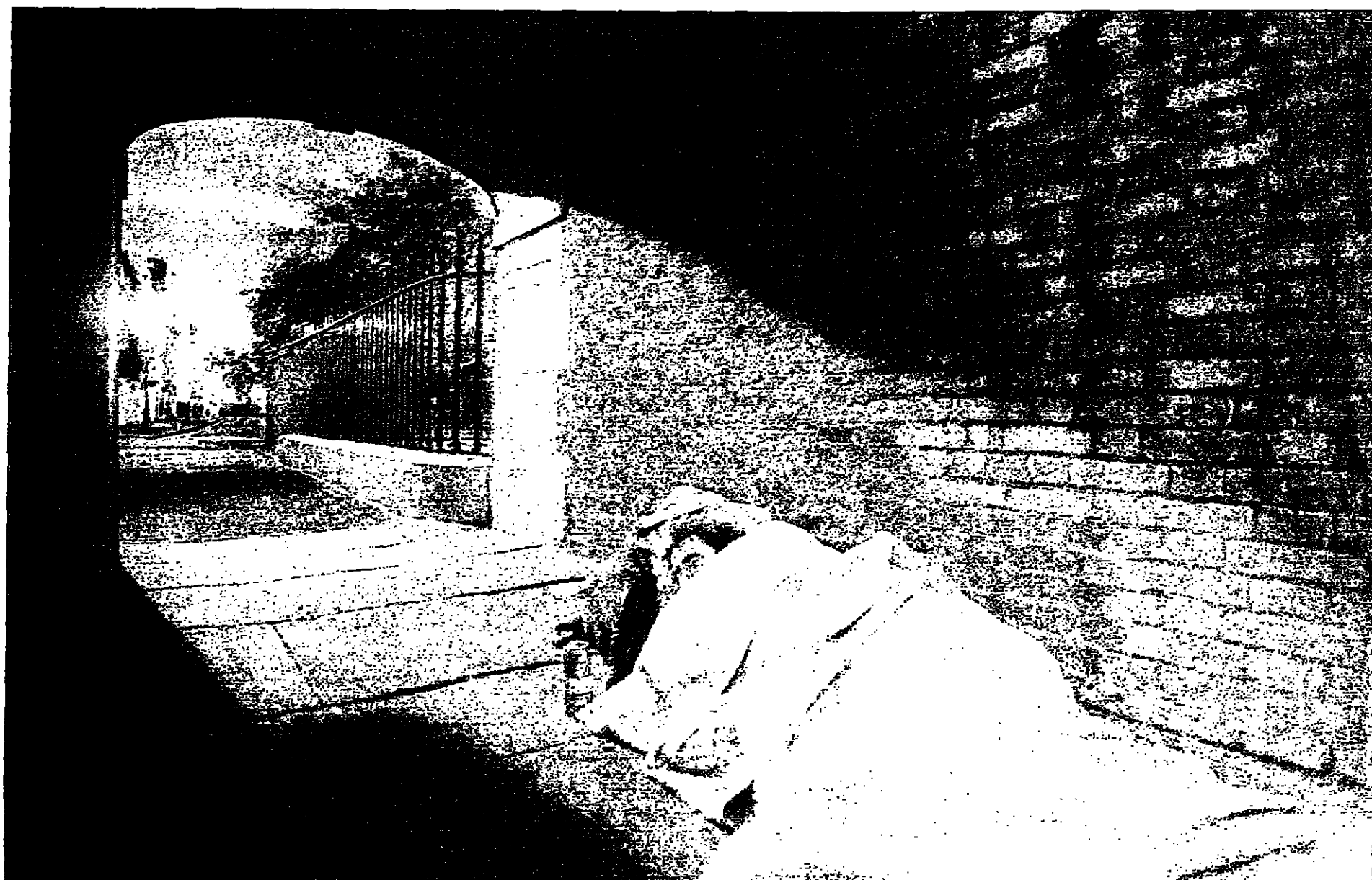
while the extra beds - 30 of which Crisis will provide at a centre in London's East End - would help, the situation remained alarming. "When the weather is like this, you have the risk of people dying on the streets from cold. It is frightening."

A spokesman for the DoE said it had already opened 28 emergency severe weather beds, but maintained that not all of them had been taken up over the Christmas period. It would review the position again in the light of the weather on Tuesday when day-centres and other services for the homeless will resume normal service after the New Year holiday.

Liz Nicholson, director of the charity for the homeless Shelter in Scotland, said that Mr Murphy's death was "just waiting to happen. I don't know how anybody can survive -19C... [as] it was in Edinburgh last night."

Les McEwan, director of social work for Lothian and Edinburgh, said the decision to open extra beds had been taken in light of the weather and before the details of Mr Murphy's death were known.

As of yesterday there had been five applications for the places, but he said: "It is the case



Under the arches: A man in Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, finds a rough shelter. Four hundred will be on the streets today when the Crisis beds close

Photograph: Glynn Griffiths

that some people choose not to go to hostels, however much we might want them to do so."

Some preferred, he said, to remain outside despite the cold. Manchester reached -12C, while an unmanned weather station in Leconfield in Humberside recorded England's low of

-15C. The coldest temperature ever recorded in England was -26.1C at Newport, Shropshire, on 10 January, 1982. The lowest in Scotland was -27.2C at Braemar on the same date.

An 87-year-old man is feared to have fallen victim to the cold. He was found collapsed near

sheltered housing in Edinburgh where he was thought to be a resident.

A family stranded by ice on an isolated island in Ulster's Lough Neagh was left to safety by the RAF as their food and fuel supplies dwindled.

Mel Downey, warden of the

National Trust-owned Coney Island, had made a number of attempts since Christmas to get to shore but could not break through the ice. Lough rescue boats were also unable to get through.

His family's problems multiplied when his wife, Julia,

slipped on the island's jetty and suffered extensive bruising to her ribs.

After her rescue today she was taken to hospital for X-rays. Mrs Downey said: "Normally we keep a good supply of food and fuel on the island but we had planned to visit

relatives in England for the new year and had allowed the stocks to run down."

"Then the snow and ice arrived, adding to our problems. When the helicopter arrived we were down to our last bag of coal and the generator was starting to run down."

## In Russia, only the dogs and drunks are in peril

Every winter, the cold weather takes Britain by surprise. Even in post-Soviet Russia, when the full ferocity of the Russian winter strikes in Moscow, only the drunks and the dogs have anything to fear. Public transport runs normally and, however poor, people make sure that their homes are well-heated.

In Ottawa, 40 inches of snow has fallen in the past few weeks. This is the amount that the Canadian capital normally expects in an entire winter, but not a single aircraft has been delayed out of the city's airport.

The contrast is vivid between countries which regard snow and ice as an inevitable part of winter, and Britain, where winter is treated as an extraordinary act of God.

In Russia, ramshackle as it is, roads and even main footpaths are salted every time there is a fresh fall of snow. The quanti-

ties of salt applied cause problems for dogs, which suffer from sore paws as a result.

Some services are not what they were in Soviet times, especially in smaller cities where not all roads are kept clear, and in Moscow one cut in government spending has led to the deaths of 250 people in the past two months. All were drunk, and in the past they would have been picked up by trucks, no longer operating, scouring the Russian capital to prevent them falling victim to the sub-zero temperatures.

In Canada, dealing with the winter has become an art. Ottawa airport has a fleet of snowploughs, four or five of which clear runways operating in a wing formation followed by

trucks with revolving brooms. On the railways, heat switches prevent points failures.

Even countries closer to home are more prepared than Britain for snow and ice. The Dutch government has invested huge sums in making sure that it has railway rolling stock that can withstand the fiercest winter temperatures. However, it does have a problem with some of its newest roads which are made of a water-absorbent material that also sucks up salt.

But Britain can take comfort that even the best-prepared Alpine nations can be caught out. Last month much of Austria ground to a halt amid an unexpectedly early - and heavy - snowfall, which caught motorists driving on summer tyres.

## Bookies' profits are put on ice

GREG WOOD

Losing streaks are nothing new for betting shops, but they are the punter's. As 1995 draws to a frostbound close, however, Britain's bookmakers are counting the cost after their worst run of misfortune since betting shops were legalised almost 35 years ago.

With Britain's racecourses frozen solid the industry estimates that turnover of £50m was lost on Boxing Day alone, and as much again on the three blank days since.

Nor does their luck show much sign of turning. Betting turnover has dropped significantly in the face of competition from the National Lottery, but the Department of National Heritage denied yesterday that it had any plans to allow bookmakers to take bets on the lottery's winning numbers.

If the cold spell is prolonged, the lottery and lack of bet-

ting turnover could put bookmakers out of business.

Even the bookies' sole cause for celebration in 1995, a reduction in betting duty, was seen as too little, too late. "It wasn't enough and it was only because the lottery was devastating us that we got it," Tom Kelly, of the Betting Office Licensees Association, said yesterday.

British backers can bet on the Irish state lottery numbers at branches of William Hill, but bets on Camelot's numbers are banned due to fears that lottery turnover will be affected. For picking three numbers out of six, bookies might pay out at 55-1 rather than the 9-1 returned by the lottery.

The industry's bad luck is set to continue this weekend as two all-weather meetings at Wolverhampton are in doubt because low temperatures are causing the course's Fibresand particles to stick together.

Race cards, page 21

## New Year rolls round a second too late

TOM WILKIE

Science Editor

Before the Scots set out in the dying moments of Hogmanay to "first foot" their neighbours as the bells ring in the New Year, they will have to pause for a second - exactly a second.

Although it may not seem likely to anyone who has already been at the festive drams, the earth is spinning round more slowly than it should with the result that the year is taking longer to go by.

Scientists have decided that a "leap second" should be added to the national timescale

at midnight on New Year's Eve, delaying the start of 1996 by one second.

The "Greenwich" Time Signal to mark the transition between 1995 and 1996 will be exceptional, in that it will contain six instead of the usual five short pips before the start of the long pip which marks the hour.

The leap second is being inserted into national timescales at the same instant world-wide, so the Japanese will enjoy their extra second at 9am on their New Year's Day while New Yorkers will get theirs even before the old year has finished, at 7pm on New Year's Eve.

For this extra second of their festivities, the Scots can thank the French, for the decision to change our time has been made by the Paris-based International Earth Rotation Service. Researchers there time the rotation of the earth against hyper-accurate "atomic" clocks and, if the earth gets out of step with the regularity of the atomic world, they dictate that leap seconds should be inserted (or, sometimes, subtracted) from the time that the rest of us keep.

The sad truth is that Greenwich Mean Time is no more. Whether we know it or not, we have been setting our watches

by Co-ordinated Universal Time (UTC) since 1972.

The introduction of UTC followed a decision five years earlier that a second of time should be defined in terms of the vibration of caesium atoms. Time according to this atomic clock can be measured to an accuracy better than one second in 300,000 years and it was not long before researchers detected discrepancies between "old" Universal Time, defined in terms of the rotation of the earth, and atomic seconds.

Tidal "friction" from the effects of the gravitational pull of the sun and the moon, com-

bined with internal inhomogeneities of the earth's composition, mean that it can speed up or slow down in its rotation. For as long as a second was defined in terms of the earth's rotation, these fluctuations, although detectable, were inherently measurable but they showed up against the better-than-metro-nomic atomic clocks. A reconciliation was needed and UTC was the result.

Since the switch to UTC, the earth has proved pretty erratic. The end-1995 leap second will be the twentieth since Co-ordinated Universal Time began in 1972.

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## news

# Worldwide crackdown on Internet pornography

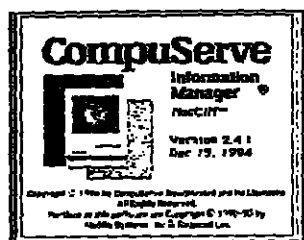
CHARLES ARTHUR  
Science Correspondent

A global crackdown on pornography on the Internet looks likely after the US-based online information provider CompuServe cut off access to its 4 million members to more than 200 Internet "newsgroups", most sex-oriented.

The move follows an investigation by the German prosecutor's office which suspects some "newsgroups" are used for passing child pornography. CompuServe said it cut off groups identified "as illegal under German criminal law".

A similar restriction is likely in the US next year when the Communications Decency Act

becomes law. A CompuServe spokeswoman said the company would comply with US law. News groups are message boards, organised loosely by topic, where Internet users can post comments, pictures and stories, and reply to other users' posts. There are about 19,000 world-wide.



CompuServe: Cut off user access to 200 newsgroups

The German prosecutor's investigation follows a law passed in 1994 which made it illegal to possess pornography involving children. The office is also studying "revisionist" claims about Nazi death camps on the Internet. In Germany it is an offence to deny the fact of the Holocaust.

The problem for police forces is that the Internet has no central control and the volume of information traffic is equal to thousands of books a day.

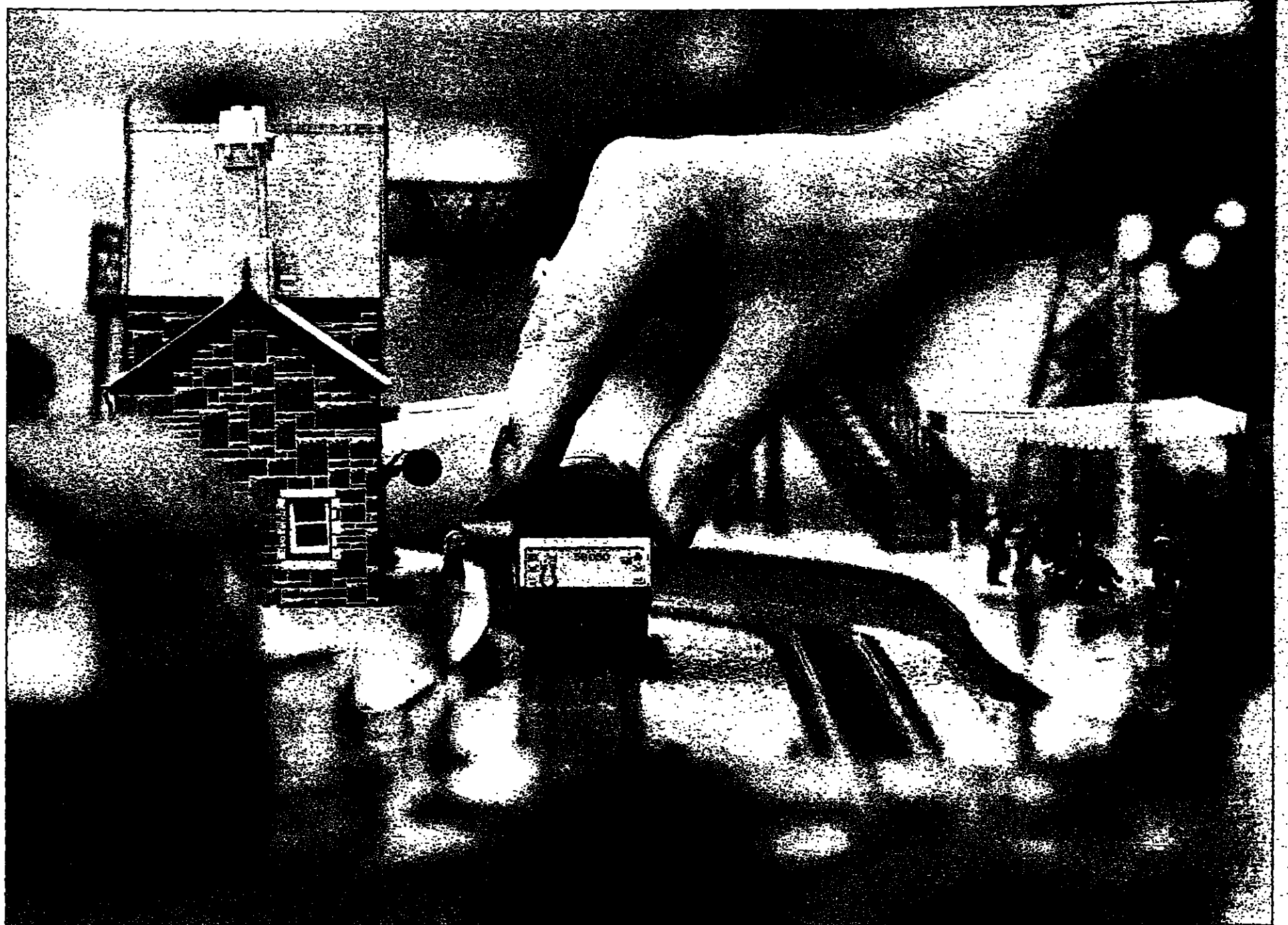
German users complained about the blocking of the newsgroups. "Do we abolish automobile traffic because of a few speeders?" asked one user. A CompuServe spokeswoman said: "It's a situation where we are the most visible corporation in a new industry, so we're looking at a whole new scenario. This is where the whole issue is so potent, because in normal life there are very few global regulations for anything. We're in uncharted waters."

However, a representative of the German prosecutor's office said that other Internet service providers had already removed the groups. "They have closed their lines off from pornography," said a spokesman. He added that 200 sources of pornography on the Internet are being examined.

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## Changing trains: The new regional networks create a market for revamped railway models



Front line: A Hornby model railway train set where changes on the national railway network are to be mirrored in new liveries and uniforms

Photograph: Philip Meech

## Privatisation signals rise in stock for Hornby

MATTHEW BRACE

The Government's railway reshuffle might be causing headaches in the industry and concern among passengers, but it is being welcomed by those running the country's "other" rail network. For Hornby Hob-

bies Ltd - the maker of model railways since the 1920s - it means big business.

Hornby's commitment to miniaturising accurately the national rail system means it faces the daunting task of repainting logos, liveries and even uniforms worn by model

stationmasters to keep in step with new designs.

Most of its scaled-down rolling stock is decorated with British Rail insignia which - model railway buffs will be quick to point out - will soon be out of date if the Government's plans go ahead and the lines are sold off.

Hornby's marketing manager, Simon Kohler, believes privatisation will mean more sales for the company as enthusiasts rush to buy the repainted versions of existing locos and carriages. "The more the merrier. I think about this every morning when I listen to the news and all I can see is bonuses for Hornby," he said.

"When these locos were introduced they tended to be in one colour. The class 58 for

example, for hauling coal trains, was a drab grey. Then they painted them a gorgeous blue with silver and people said, 'Wow, I want another one'."

The repainting of these freight locos signalled the start of Hornby's privatisation process. Now privatisation of passenger services looks certain, the company is watching and waiting for the first new livery designs.

It will take about five months to copy a new livery and get the repainted range into the shops. So, if Stagecoach, the bus company that won the franchise for South-west Trains last week, begins running services on schedule in April 1996, then scaled-down versions of its trains should be on sale in time for next Christmas.

David Jinks, editor of *Model Railway Enthusiast* magazine, will be at the front of the queue. "I'll be there," he said. "I used to hate the rail blue, as they called it, that the trains were all painted in. I just couldn't stand it, so this is a good opportunity to get some new stock with some better designs. It's also exciting because this is the first time a change of this scale has occurred since the old big four rail companies were nationalised."

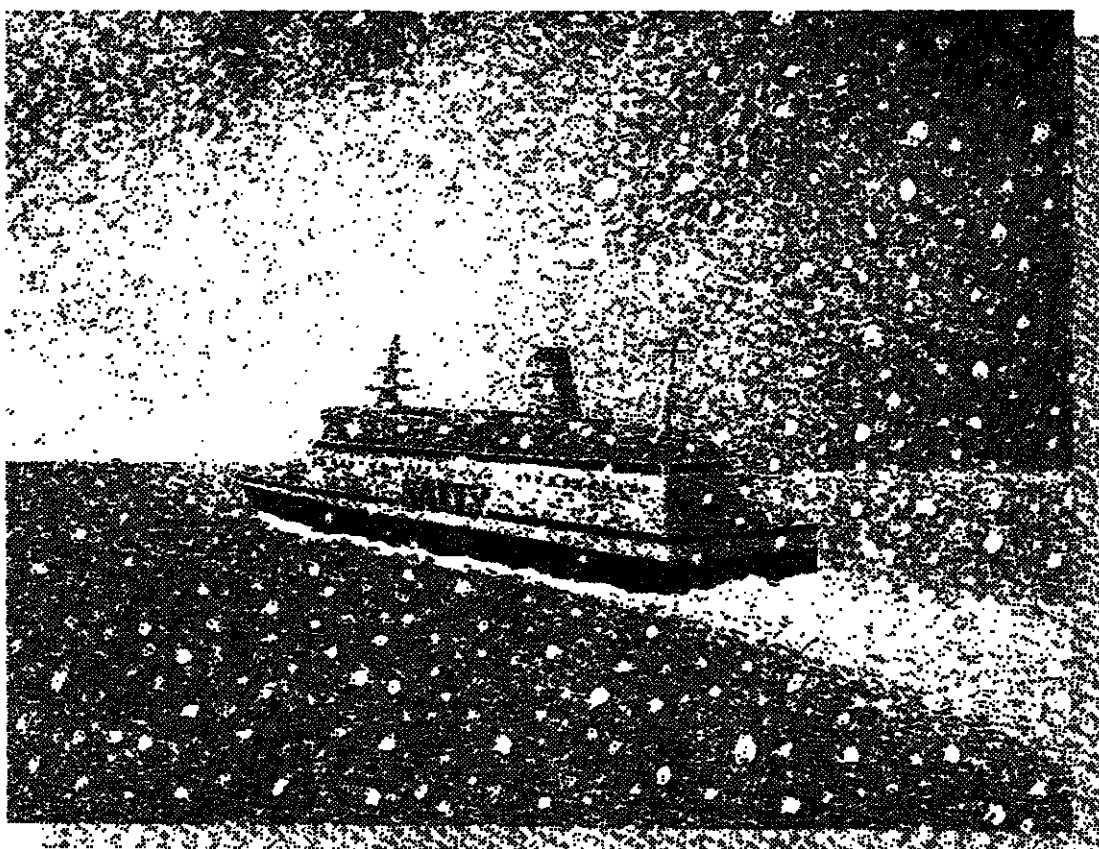
Mr Kohler hopes Hornby's good relationship with the rail authorities will mean it can get sneak previews of new liveries and guards will have to follow suit. "After all it's advertising for the companies too," he said. "Through us, the Stagecoach liveries in the South, for

example, will also be seen in Scotland."

Hornby's current prices (between £14 and £45 for diesel locos and £60 for steam) are unlikely to change after privatisation, despite the risk that it might have to pay the passenger services a registration fee for the use of their new logos. It has already had to pay some private freight companies for the privilege.

Rail privatisation will also almost certainly signal the widespread phasing out of the British Rail uniform and the donning of new private outfits. Miniature station masters and guards will have to follow suit.

By this time next year model railways could look as different as their full-size counterparts.



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THE ART OF SMOOTH SAILING

## Dieters see slim hope in drug

DANNY PENMAN

A drug which deceives people into thinking they have just eaten could soon take the pain out of dieting, according to researchers at Liverpool University.

The scientists have discovered the body's way of triggering hunger. A chemical called neuropeptide Y sets off a series of brain chemicals that induce food cravings.

The researchers, led by Professor Gareth Williams, are working on a way of blocking the neuropeptide. They hope to produce a drug that can be snorted or sniffed to instantly banish hunger pangs.

Professor Williams says that for many people the body cannot recognise when the body is overeating. The new drug could trick the body into thinking it had just eaten.

"It will work on all people regardless of how much weight they need to lose because it will control one of the strongest signals in the brain," said Professor Williams.

But overeating is more complex than a simple desire to ingest calories. Boredom and the desire to change a frame of mind are probably far more important. "People eat to change the way they feel about themselves and that does not have a lot to do with hunger," said David Sunter, a counsellor with Promis, a service helping people with eating disorders.

Kim, who is currently receiving counselling from Promis, said the idea sounded "quite ridiculous" but it "would probably be a great money spinner".

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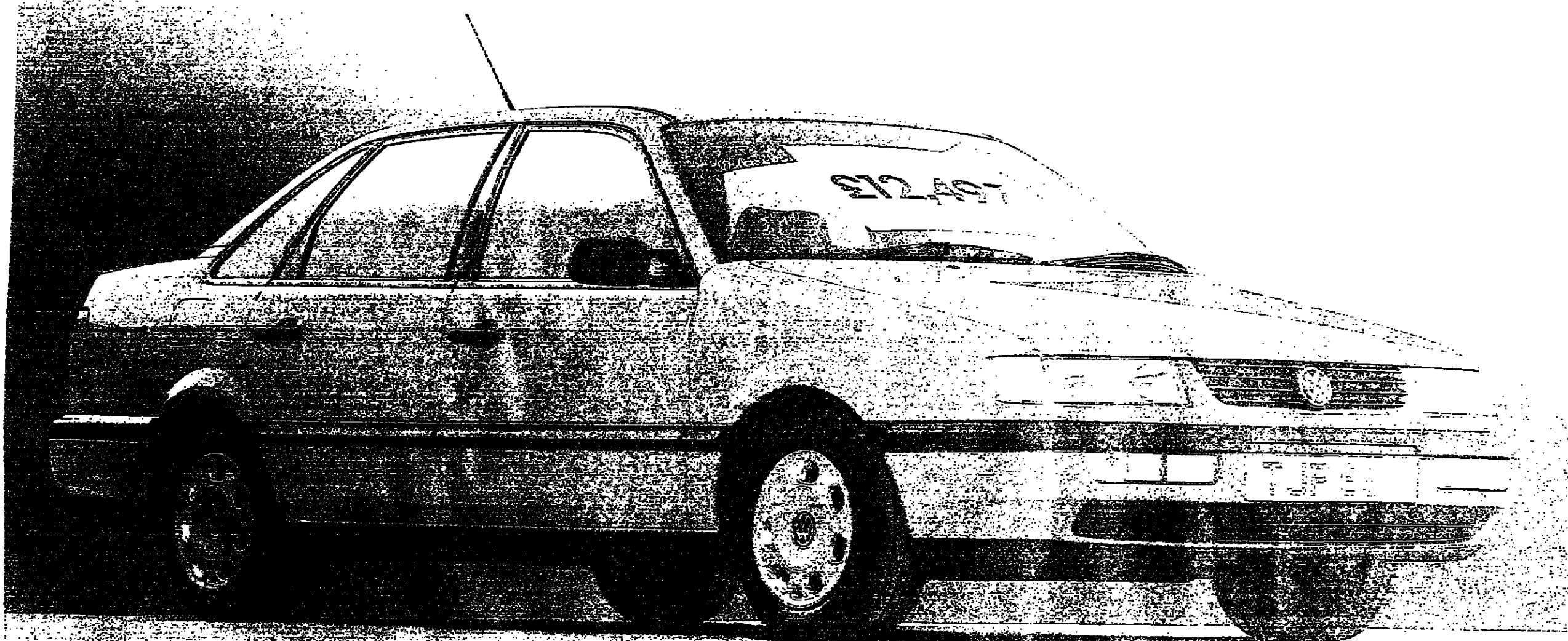
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# THE NEW YEAR HONOURS

## Musicals top the bill

ARTS  
REBECCA FOWLER

Arise Sir SuperMac, Cameron Mackintosh, the theatre impresario who brought *Miss Saigon*, *Oliver*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Phantom of the Opera* to the stage, celebrating his knighthood yesterday at his snowbound Scottish estate.

He was joined on the new year's honours list by some of the most popular names from the world of arts and media including the pop star Elton John, CBE, artist Beryl Cook, OBE, dancer Antoinette Sibling, OBE, and the Rev Wilbert Awdry, OBE, creator of Thomas the Tank Engine.

Sir Cameron, 49, who has created some of the most successful musicals in the world and is renowned for his first-night parties, was in the Western Highlands this weekend where the telephones were down. "We are absolutely delighted for him, but we can't even ring to congratulate him," Nick Allott, his executive producer said.

"It is very well deserved, because he has worked very hard

for 30 years and presided over a change in the whole face of British theatre which has transformed it into a world leader."

Among his most successful shows is the musical adaptation of Victor Hugo's novel *Les Misérables*, which he dubbed the Glums. It has taken £600m in the box office and been seen by 41m people in London, New York, Japan and on tour.

He began his career starting sweeping the dress circle at Drury Lane Theatre, and he worked as a theatre hand for £14 a week. He broke into the big time in 1981, when he worked with Sir Andrew Lloyd on *Cats*.

Although there have been blips, including *Moby Dick*, his shows make £1.7m a week and he is worth £200m.

Another great British showman honoured yesterday was Elton John, best known for the flamboyant performances of his ballad-style songs. Britain's second highest earning popstar, on £12.5m, after Phil Collins, he is currently working on a musical based on Verdi's opera *Aida*. He was also commended in the honours' list for his charitable work, including his Elton John AIDS Foundation.

The film world was honoured with a CBE for Nicolas Roeg, the unconventional director who scandalised his producers with *Performance* in 1968, starring Mick Jagger. He also made *Don't Look Now*, which included a controversial sex scene between Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie, and *Bad Timing*, which starred Theresa Russell, who became his wife.

Women were well represented in the arts and media on the honours list, with appointments including Peggy Mount OBE, the actress, best-known as the formidable batleaxe Ma Larkin in the *Studs* television series, *The Larkins*; Julie Goodyear MBE, the star of *Coronation Street*; Jill Paton-Walsh CBE, the children's writer and Frances Line OBE, controller of BBC Radio 4.

Clare Rymer has already been dubbed affectionately "Old Bag Extraordinaire" by her family for her appointment. Ms Rymer, who has had four operations in the last five weeks for a torn cartilage in her knee, said she was a little startled to hear the news, but added: "It's like getting a big tick from teacher."



Elton John CBE: Music and charity. Photograph: Herbie Knott

## On a winning streak

SPORT  
LIZ SEAR

Jonathan Edwards, England's world champion triple-jumper, is probably best known as the man who preferred to miss a world championship and two European Cup competitions because of his commitment to Christianity.

But this year, Edwards reversed his decision, and the son of a Devon vicar became the first man to break the 18-metre barrier at this year's world championships.

"I'm thrilled - it's a great honour," said Edwards, now an MBE, who was also voted the BBC's Sports Personality of the Year last month.

"Outside of actual athletics, this achievement, along with winning the BBC award, has been one of my dreams. Now it has come true and I have got both of them. It is just incredible. It is a fabulous end to what has been a fantastic year for me."

Police colleagues of constable Dean Richards, the Leicester and England rugby union forward, may be surprised to

know that he too, will receive an MBE. They have been known to say that when he walks into a rowdy bar on duty he has the same quietening effect as a Wild-West gunslinger.

On the pitch, his influence is not dissimilar. Although he was suspended two months ago after receiving yellow cards for stamping and punching, Richards, 32, was the leading force in Leicester's triumphant battle to gain this year's Courage League title. I am just an ordinary bloke, sitting in a corner getting on with my life, the world's most capped back-row forward once insisted.

Also honoured with MBEs are the most-capped scrum half, Robert Jones of Swansea, and the footballer Ian Rush, who has scored a record 343 goals in 646 league and cup appearances for Liverpool.

Shaun Edwards, the Great Britain and Wigan Rugby League captain this year, has become only the third Rugby League player to have been awarded an OBE, following Mal Reilly (1991) and Garry Schofield (1994). The only player to have figured in all 42 of Wigan's record run of unbeaten Challenge Cup ties. Ed-



On target: Liverpool striker Ian Rush gets an MBE

wards, 29, also boasts 15 tries in 36 Test appearances. This year's victorious Ryder Cup golf team is also celebrated, with an OBE for captain Bernard Gallacher. He is joined by the cricketer Dermot Reeve, captain of Warwickshire, who has overseen victory in six major trophies since becoming captain in 1993.

Sportswomen are also represented, with Karen Dixon, Britain's leading events rider, receiving an MBE. And even commentators are not left out. Ted Lowe, the whispering voice of snooker, is also honoured with an MBE.

Jonathan Edwards interview, page 19

## Royal Air Force

### Order of the Bath

Knight Grand Cross (GCB)  
Air Commodore, C-M Sir Michael, CBE CB

Companion (CB)  
James Air Vice-Marshal Timothy W. Norton, Air Vice-Marshal Peter Collins, AFC

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Commander (CBE)  
Gordon Col Tresham Dames, formerly the Light Dragoons, Lt Col Charles Mitchell, formerly the Royal Corps of Transport, Lt Col David O'Brien, formerly the Royal Corps of Transport, Lt Col David O'Brien, formerly the Royal Corps of Transport

Officer (OBE)  
Lt Col Roger Norman, R. Tank Regiment, Lt Col Roger Norman, R. Tank Regiment, Lt Col Roger Norman, R. Tank Regiment

Member (MBE)  
Lt Col Stephen John, R. Tank Regiment, Lt Col Stephen John, R. Tank Regiment, Lt Col Stephen John, R. Tank Regiment

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## Order of the British Empire

Commander (CBE)  
Air Commodore, C-M Sir Michael, CBE CB

Companion (CB)  
James Air Vice-Marshal Timothy W. Norton, Air Vice-Marshal Peter Collins, AFC

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## Royal Navy

### Order of the Bath

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Goodman, Rear-Admiral Frederick Brian

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## international

## Smiles for Nato in 'heart of darkness'

EMMA DALY  
Banja Luka

Nato's chief commander in Bosnia yesterday visited the Serb city of Banja Luka, described by UN officials as the "heart of darkness" in reference to the ethnic purges of the past four years, to a fulsome welcome from local officials.

Children mobbed the US army helicopter ferrying Admiral Leighton Smith to a snowy football field in Banja Luka. Serb officers happily escorted him around a sensitive weapons factory and Nikola Koljevic, vice-president of the Bosnian Serb statelet, announced he would tell his constituents to remain in five Sarajevo suburbs when they revert to government rule.

Recent history — the refusal of the Serb authorities to allow the top UN official to visit Banja Luka, let alone to deploy peace-keepers, and the "ethnic cleansing" of half a million non-Serbs — was forgotten in

the honeymoon glow of the Dayton peace plan. "History starts now," the admiral said. "We don't want to go back in time or dig up old wounds... I think that's what it is all about."

The gloom, fury and confusion permeating Serb-held Sarajevo, whose citizens face life under the rule of those they besieged for so long, means nothing in Banja Luka, which did relatively well out of the Dayton plan. "We suffered enough for Sarajevo; we don't want to get in any more fights," said Tanja Lucic, a young Banja Lukan deputised to translate for Admiral Smith. "The Dayton plan says Sarajevo is not ours anyway, so we just have to agree with it."

Rivalry between Banja Luka, the only real city the Serbs hold in Bosnia, and Pale, the village capital near Sarajevo that owed its power to proximity, has spun into outright hostility.

Mr Koljevic, a veteran of the Pale circle, has moved to Banja Luka, apparently in an attempt to secure a political future. He said Admiral Smith had assured him I-For would do all it could to guarantee the safety of Serbs in Sarajevo. "I will recommend [that Serbs stay] but think it's very difficult to convince them... and the problem has to be solved in the next two weeks if we want to prevent catastrophe."

However, in line with Pale's attempts to rewrite Dayton, Mr Koljevic said the solution for Sarajevo would be the "Mostar model" of ethnic cantons — which will not happen. Admiral Smith stated categorically that he does not have the authority to extend the transition period to Bosnian rule in Sarajevo, and that I-For hoped instead to convince Serbs to stay. "We are seriously trying to convey to the people of Sarajevo that our job is to establish a secure environment in which they can lead normal lives," he said.

While Pale mutters darkly about the need to rewrite Dayton, appealing to Admiral

Smith to extend the transition period to Bosnian rule over Serb-held Sarajevo, Banja Luka has welcomed I-For with open arms. Major-General Michael Jackson, commander of the British Nato sector, was in the city yesterday to discuss the logistics of moving his headquarters. And Admiral Smith's request to visit the Kosmos military complex, where missile systems and other weapons are repaired and maintained, won a gushing invitation unthinkable a few weeks ago.

"What would you like to see?" Colonel Stevan Radivojica, the director, asked, before leading the admiral to a hangar housing a tank, a howitzer, anti-aircraft guns and a British-made Marconi radar system for use with the Serb air-defence network that downed two Nato jets this year. The colonel handed the admiral two gift-wrapped Kosmos diaries as a souvenir. "You can use it when you visit your soldiers on the front line," he said cheerily.

War appeal tops £100,000

Independent readers have given more than £100,000 to our appeal to support four charities working to help child victims of the wars in former Yugoslavia. The total recorded last night was £100,674.

We hope to improve on this figure before the end of the year. Please make your cheques or postal orders payable to the charity of your choice and send them to us with the completed coupon. The four charities are: Save the Children, which is focusing on children who have

been separated from their families and reuniting them.

The Red Cross, which is running the largest humanitarian operation in the region, looking after refugee camps and linking people through its messaging network.

War Child, which plans to build a £2.5m music-therapy centre in Mostar, and to send prosthetics to wounded children in the Tuzla area.

Child Advocacy International, which aims to bring 100 sick children to Britain for treatment.



Painful parting: Dionne Polk hugs her boyfriend Mark Tucker at New Orleans airport before his departure to serve in the peace-keeping force in Bosnia. Photograph: AP

## IN BRIEF

## Colonel blamed for death of his men

Brussels — A Belgian officer who served with the United Nations in Rwanda last year is to stand trial over the massacre of 10 of his men by Rwandan soldiers, the Belgian army announced yesterday. Colonel Luc Marchal will face charges in a military tribunal of "homicide by lack of foresight and precaution". The 10 Belgian peace-keepers were captured, tortured and killed by Rwandan troops on 7 April 1994, the day after the country's President, Juvenal Habyarimana, died in a suspicious air crash. The Belgians were guarding the Rwandan Prime Minister, Agathe Uwingsiyimana, who was also killed by rampaging Rwandan soldiers. AP

## Mafia on the move

Palermo — The reputed Mafia "boss of bosses" and 14 other alleged mob leaders have been transferred from a Sicilian prison after the killing of a jail official. The 15 suspects, including the alleged Mafia kingpin Salvatore "Totò" Riina, were moved to maximum-security cells in northern Italy. Police believe the order to kill prison agent Giuseppe Montalto may have come from inside the Ucciardone prison in Palermo, where Riina and the others were held. AP

## US executed 56

Washington — Fifty-six killers were executed in the United States this year, the highest national figure for capital punishment since 1957. With more than 3,000 men and women on death rows awaiting execution, the prospect for 1996 is a still higher total. AP

## Red Sea mediation

Sanaa — The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, arrived in Sanaa, where he is expected to mediate between Yemen and Eritrea in a dispute over Red Sea islands which turned violent this month. Reuter

## Royal break

Oslo — Crown Prince Haakon is breaking Norwegian royal traditions and planning to attend university in the United States instead of England. Prince Haakon, in a year-end interview, did not say which university he wants to attend. But the teenager said he wants to study political science. Both his father, King Harald, and his grandfather, King Olav, went to Balliol College, Oxford. AP

**INDEPENDENT CHILDREN OF WAR APPEAL**

I would like to make a donation to help children in Former Yugoslavia. I enclose a cheque/postal order/CAV/CAF card for £..... made payable to one of the following charities:

☐ Child Advocacy International  
☐ British Red Cross Former Yugoslavia Appeal  
☐ War Child  
☐ Save the Children  
 (please tick as appropriate)

Signature..... Date.....

Please post your donation(s) to: The Independent Children of War Appeal, c/o the Independent, PO Box 4013, London E14 5BB. THANK YOU

## Australians unveil the fastest killing machine in history

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY  
Defence Correspondent

An Australian gun that can fire 20 times as fast as the world's fastest-shooting machine-gun is likely to revolutionise weapons technology.

The gun, which has already been tested, can shoot 135,000 rounds a minute at a target — so much metal that it could even

be used to defeat laser-guided "smart" bombs. The Australian government's export agency, Austrade, is looking at selling the design, though it is unlikely to be available soon.

Senior Australian officials said they were still evaluating the new weapon but that it was potentially a "most significant" development.

Since the 1982 Falklands war,

when the Argentines used Exocet "sea-skimming" missiles to disable HMS Sheffield, warship designers have made ships bristling with rapid-firing guns such as the American Vulcan Phalanx, which can pour out up to 6,000 rounds a minute, as a last-ditch defence.

But the technology used in the new weapon, which has already fired 20 times faster than

the Phalanx, could also be significant in defeating incoming ballistic and cruise missiles, which are of increasing concern to developed countries. It could also defend important targets against the "smart" bombs widely used in the Gulf war.

The Australian inventor of "Metal Storm", Mike O'Dwyer, went back to the origins of firearms in the 14th century to

build a weapon that "threw more lead than existing technology".

The principle is extremely simple, and eliminates the need for moving parts. MAB Engineering, which makes rifles for Australia's Olympic shooting team, has built prototypes of the weapon which cost £23,000 to develop, a minimal cost compared to most defence developments.

Whereas conventional rapid-fire Gatling guns have multiple barrels, each of which fires a round and is then reloaded, each barrel of Metal Storm has many rounds — the latest prototype has 90 — stacked one behind the other in each barrel.

That way, the six-barrelled "pod" can fire 540 rounds very fast. Instead of reloading, a new pod is then substituted. "We have been able to put multiple rounds in an individual barrel separated by propellant loads," said Mr O'Dwyer, "and develop a simple means of then firing the leading rounds and preventing the ignition of high-pressure hot gases sneaking round past the following round and igniting its propellant."

## Why exercising on a bike isn't half as good as this.

Bikes are fine for exercising your legs. So if you just want muscular thighs, keep pedalling. But if you'd like to become leaner, firmer and trimmer all over, try a NordicTrack Skier.

Unlike bikes, treadmills and step machines, a NordicTrack Skier exercises all your muscles.

In the upper body, it works your stomach, waist, back, chest, shoulders and arms. While lower down it tones up your hips, buttocks, thighs and calves.

Being a total body workout, the NordicTrack Skier burns more calories than any other exercise machine: 24% more than a stationary bike and 35% more than a stairclimber.

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out of all the contestants in the Olympics, the cross-country skiers are the fittest.

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But the NordicTrack Skier doesn't just give you a better workout. It gives you a gentler one too. The smooth, non-jarring action puts less stress and strain on joints and ligaments, protecting your back, knees, hips and other vulnerable areas.

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Boris's back: President Yeltsin being greeted on return to the Kremlin after his illness

Photograph: AP

## Yeltsin returns to keep Russia in suspense

BRIAN KILLEN  
Reuters

Moscow — President Boris Yeltsin, returning to the Kremlin unannounced, recorded a New Year address to the nation yesterday but maintained suspense over his political future.

The 64-year-old Russian leader, well wrapped up against freezing temperatures, strolled through the snow-covered grounds of the Kremlin on his first day back at work since suffering a heart attack more than two months ago, and stopped to chat with tourists in Cathedral Square.

Mr Yeltsin vowed to stick to his programme of reforms, despite gains by his Communist opponents in last week's parliamentary elections. But he gave no clues about whether he would seek re-election as president next year. "I am still thinking about it," he said, adding that he would announce his intentions at the beginning of February.

Under the Russian constitution, real power lies in the presidency, and Mr Yeltsin's rivals are already gearing up for an election scheduled for 16 June.

The President left a sanatorium earlier this week to spend the New Year holiday with his family at a neighbouring coun-

try residence in Barvikha, a wooded area west of Moscow. He was taken to hospital on 26 October for the second time in less than four months, suffering from ischaemia, a blood-supply problem. He has been increasing his workload gradually.

Interfax news agency said Mr Yeltsin assured Muscovites during his walkabout that there would be no reversal of market reforms, but acknowledged that the impact of reforms ought to be softened next year.

He pointed to signs of economic stabilisation, saying industrial output should grow and people should begin to feel the benefits.

However, he repeated a warning about economic "saboteurs", saying the staff of the ministries of economy and finance and some other organisations had to be improved. "There are still people there who are abusing their positions. A ruthless struggle must be waged with them," he said. "There are bureaucrats who are blatantly stealing and there are more than a few of them."

Mr Yeltsin told Interfax he was not ready to go back to working 18-hour days. "It is impossible to drive oneself too hard like the last time," he said, referring to his hasty return to work after his first hospital stay in July.

## Tax grudge clue in Reno bomb plot

JOHN CARLIN  
Washington

Two neighbours from Gardnerville, Nevada, discovered over a chat on a Sunday morning recently that they had a common dislike: the taxman.

So that day, according to the police, they built a 100lb bomb, placed it inside a plastic drum, drove 45 miles north to the city of Reno and dropped it outside an office of the Inland Revenue.



Hurst (left) and Baillie: Hated the Inland Revenue

Service. The ingredients Ellis Edward Hurst and Joseph Martin Baillie used to make the bomb were fertiliser and fuel, the mixture that blew up a government building in Oklahoma City in April, killing 169 people. But that, police believe, is where the similarity ends.

Because of a faulty fuse, the bomb failed to go off. Nor was it apparently designed to cause loss of life. Had the home-made device detonated, it might have levelled the building. But

the likelihood was that none of the 70 tax-office employees would have been hurt, as the bomb was timed to go off on the evening of Sunday, 17 December, when the building was empty.

Mr Hurst allegedly confessed to the crime, implicating his friend, Mr Baillie, after his arrest on Thursday. FBI officials said yesterday they had established no connection between the would-be Reno bombers — one a garbage-disposal worker, the other an odd-job man — and the two suspected right-wing extremists accused of the Oklahoma killings. Neither had they found any evidence to suggest Mr Hurst and Mr Baillie belonged to any organised political faction, such as the far-right "militias" whose members have been linked to a series of bombings of government buildings in Nevada over the past two years.

"We have nothing to indicate this was connected with any other bombings in Nevada or anywhere else in the United States," an FBI agent said at a news conference on Thursday.

However, officials said they were continuing investigations and would not rule out the possibility that the two men, who have been charged and face a maximum prison sentence of 30 years each, might have been part of an anti-tax movement that has been growing in the western US in recent years.

So far the evidence suggests Mr Hurst and Mr Baillie acted on their own initiatives. Federal prosecutors said both men had a troubled history with the IRS. What appears to have upset Mr Baillie is the action the IRS took to oblige him to meet his fiscal obligations. According to police, they wrote to Mr Baillie's employer with instructions to send his month's wages straight to the IRS in lieu of unpaid taxes.

## Hapless new year for Italy as Dini quits

ANDREW GUMBEL

Italy effectively guaranteed yesterday that it would wake up on New Year's morning with a political hangover of gigantic proportions, as its government prepared to resign and politicians blankly asked themselves what on earth will happen next.

The Prime Minister, Lamberto Dini, announced that he would go to the presidential palace this morning to hand in his resignation following the completion of the temporary mandate bestowed on him a little over 11 months ago. The move had been anticipated after approval of the 1996 budget, the last plank of Mr Dini's four-point programme, in the Senate just before Christmas.

But Mr Dini's departure leaves the country not so much with a political crisis as with a political vacuum. Parliament was supposed to have decided

by now whether to renew Mr Dini's mandate, approve an alternative government or move to general elections. But, as it turned out, the country's political parties have been startlingly unable to resolve the question, and parliament remains as divided as ever.

Italy thus moves into 1996, and its six-month-long term as president of the European Union, in a state of political chaos every bit as complex as the one it found itself in a year ago, when Mr Dini was appointed in *extremis* after the resignation of his predecessor, Silvio Berlusconi.

Until a concrete decision is forthcoming, Mr Dini will continue in a caretaker capacity. But the country's inability to put its political house in order, more than three years after the old Christian Democrat-led order collapsed in a heap of corruption scandals, risks serious-

ly damaging its credibility and the prospect of playing a key role in European construction.

"Everything is very fluid. Anything could happen," one government source said this week in an indication of the climate of sheer bewilderment about the future. Even Italy's most revered political commentators, such as the historian and journalist Indro Montanelli or the broadcaster Enzo Biagi, admit they have given up trying to understand what is going on.

Broadly speaking, there are three possible options:

■ President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro dissolves parliament and calls a general election. This is the option everyone wants to avoid, because there is no guarantee a new parliament would succeed any better than its predecessor in producing a stable majority to back a government. Elections would also disrupt

Italy's EU presidency and further damage the country's credibility in foreign capitals and on the financial markets.

■ Mr Dini stays on for six to nine months to see Italy through the EU presidency, further prune its public finances in a last-ditch attempt to join the single European currency, and overhaul the electoral system to make it more workable.

This is probably the most rational option, and the one Mr Dini favours, but could be torpedoed by parliament's fratricidal instincts.

■ All parties get together to form a government of national unity, with a two-year mandate to carry out wide-ranging constitutional reforms and perform the necessary economic surgery. Mr Berlusconi proposed this two days ago, egged on by approving noises from the President, but few believe it could hold together for long.

God and Allah may  
not see eye  
to eye on this one.  
Frankly we  
don't give a damn.



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# Deadwood stages revival of Wild West casino



Deadwood: Gambling boom is fading in the town of Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok

Photograph: Rex

RUPERT CORNWELL  
Deadwood, South Dakota

"This is not Las Vegas," assured the Mayor of Deadwood, extending manners and sweet reason not instantly associated with a city of hard pedigree. Her sex is a surprise too.

Elected in May, Barbara Allen is the first woman to run this landmark of the once-Wild West, now a lovingly restored, child-friendly theme park whose patron saints are Kevin Costner and the benign shade of Wild Bill Hickok. But whether in the Nevada desert or at one of the 83 casinos here in the Black Hills of South Dakota, a slot machine is a slot machine. No less than Vegas, Deadwood is a monument to gambling, America's true pastime – a pastime that finally is turning sour.

Just a decade ago, the rip-roaring Deadwood Gulch of 1870s gold-rush fame was dying on its feet, ravaged by fire, flood and the diminishing revenues from the local mine, eking out a parlous living on the celebrity of one-time inhabitants like Hickok and Calamity Jane.

Then in 1989, and only for Deadwood, South Dakota became the third state to legalise casino gambling, after Nevada and New Jersey.

By high-rolling Vegas standards, Deadwood is pretty tame: blackjack, poker and slots only, and a maximum stake of \$5. But Ms Allen has no doubt that gambling saved Deadwood: "Without it, our little town was down for the count." A town of 2,000 now attracts 1.3 million visitors a year who wager over \$50m (£32m) a month. Main Street is lined with saloons, casinos and gambling dens, among them the Midnight Star, owned by Kevin Costner, complete with sports bar, swanky restaurant and window cases full of costumes worn by the great man in his most famous films.

As for Wild Bill, he bestrides the place from beyond the grave, even though he was only in town for five weeks before he was gunned down (while playing poker) on 2 August 1876. His droop-moustached face looms from statues, bars and campgrounds, drawing in the punters from across the plains

and beyond. "Most of them have grey hair; they're out for a good time," says Ms Allen. "We're more honey than oth-ir casino towns." Deadwood is for the family. "But even here, in a relative showcase for gambling – or rather "gaming" or "casino entertainment" as its promoters call it – the problems of the industry are steadily more visible.

In 20 years, gambling has turned from sideshow to national obsession. Americans bet \$480bn a year, equivalent to 7 per cent of the gross domestic product. Half the population, 125 million, visited a casino last year. In Mississippi, America's poorest state, more money was spent in casinos – \$29bn – than on taxable retail goods.

Today, however, the boom is slowing, and in some places turning to bust. One explanation is the economic cycle: the laws of supply and demand apply to gambling too. But deeper currents are at work. If it is true that two great forces wrestle in the American soul – puritanism and libertarianism – then after a decade of the latter, the pendulum is swinging towards the puritan way.

Like New Orleans, free-wheeling metropolis of a Louisiana where the outgoing Democratic governor, Edwin Edwards, was a self-professed gambling addict whose main claim to fame is having once paid a \$500,000 debt to a Las Vegas casino with a suitcase full of cash. In the Big Easy, surely, gambling could not fail, but two riverboat casinos on the Mississippi have shut, and construction of a huge casino on the edge of the French Quarter has halted. Mr Edwards's successor is a Republican businessman who ran on an anti-gambling platform.

As more and more states get into the act, realisation has dawned that money wagered at the gaming tables is drawn from other parts of the economy, that business and jobs gained by a casino town are lost elsewhere. Most important, the huge social costs of gambling – the financial pressures, crime, the direct and indirect destruction of families – are becoming ever more apparent. An astonishing 4 per cent of the population are "problem gamblers," according to one recent study. The fiasco in New Orleans is forcing Louisiana to chop \$80m out of its \$4.3bn budget, while the city is having to lay off 300 workers.

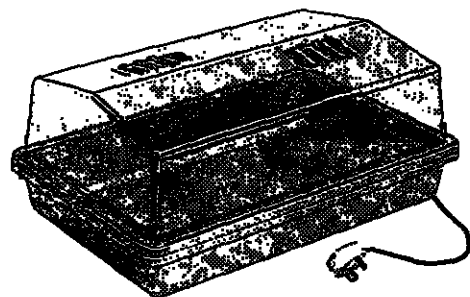
A legal quirk allows Indians to run casinos on their reservations in 26 states, while 10 states permit gambling elsewhere. But despite intense lobbying by an industry with annual gross revenues of \$40bn, those figures have not changed for two years. No more is heard of the industry boast that soon every American will be three hours or less away from a casino.

Even Deadwood has its problems. For all its carefully rebuilt and repainted facades, the restoration of the original brick-paved streets and other improvements – all paid for by gaming revenue – complaints are mounting that ordinary shops have vanished, that fraud, theft and other gambling-related crimes are on the increase. And Deadwood is the happy face of Casinoland USA.

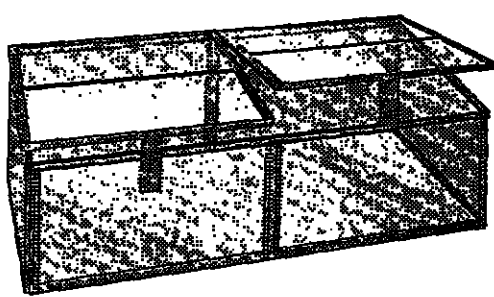
Proudly, Ms Allen points to one peculiar surge in her civic duties. "In seven months I've married 120 couples, only five of them local. When I ask them why they come here, they just say, 'Well, we heard Deadwood was a neat place.' And it is. But for how much longer?"

## Prices so low, you'd think they'd fallen off the back of a sleigh.

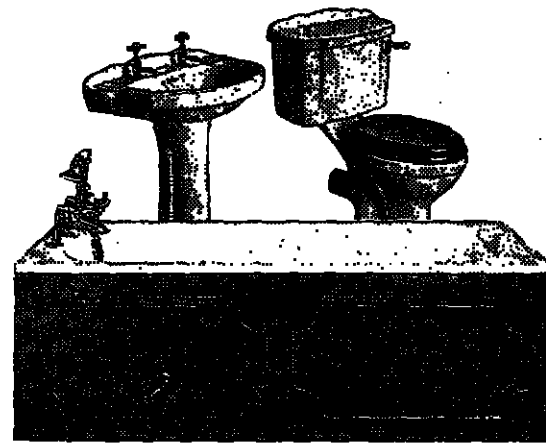
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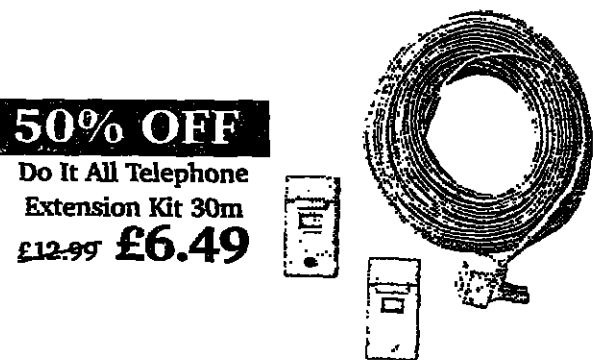
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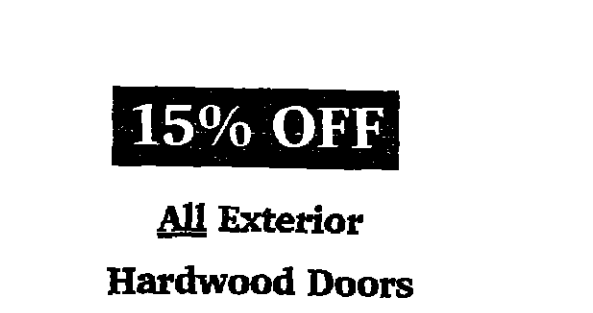
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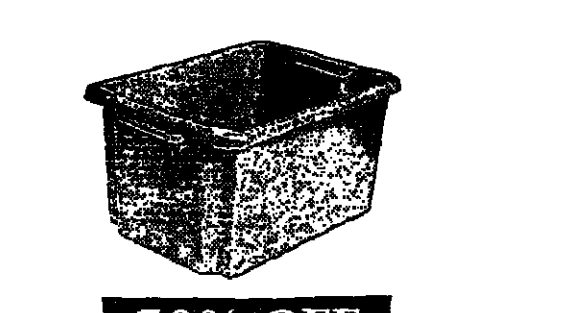
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## Crash pilots 'distracted by small talk'

PHIL DAVISON  
Latin America Correspondent

The pilots of an American Airlines plane which crashed in Colombia before Christmas had been involved in an "extensive discussion" about the plane's stewardesses and failed to carry out a routine pre-flight checklist, according to a preliminary report.

Colombia's Civil Aviation Authority report suggested a last-minute wrong turn by the pilots caused the Boeing 757 to hit a mountain near its destination, the city of Cali, on a flight from Miami on 20 December, killing all but four of the 167 people on board.

Then, when flashing "pull up" alarms told the pilots they were too close to the ground, they gunned the engines and hauled the nose up but neglected to deactivate the plane's landing "speed brakes," making it difficult to gain altitude, the report said. It did not say whether switching off the brakes would have given them enough altitude to clear the 12,000ft mountain.

While not questioning the report, an air-traffic controller in Cali said the disaster might have been averted if the aviation authorities had replaced a radar beacon destroyed by Marxist guerrillas in 1992. Had there been a beacon in the crash area, 40 miles from the city, Cali airport would have noticed that the plane was astray and could have corrected its course, said the controller.

The Colombian report, based on data taken from the plane's two flight recorders, included some, but not all, of the last dialogue between the pilots and

the Cali control tower. It did not include the pilots' conversation about the stewardesses but indicated they had been talking about their suits.

"An extensive discussion on subjects not relevant to the flight is heard before the descent," the report said. "The subject of the discussion refers to the schedules of the flight attendants."

Although only preliminary, the report came as a reminder that experienced pilots – in this case Captain Nicholas Tofur, 57, who had been 26 years with American Airlines and had logged 10,000 flying hours, including many landings in Cali – can make fatal mistakes. It also looked certain to launch millions of dollars' worth of lawsuits against the airline.

American lawyers are already arriving in Colombia, offering their services to relatives of victims. By yesterday two Miami attorneys had lodged suits against the airline.

In a statement which appeared to accept the findings of the Colombian report, American Airlines said: "We are saddened that human error on the part of our people may have contributed to the accident. The accident reminds us that aviation, while not inherently dangerous, is terribly unforgiving of any inattention to detail."

The report said the pilots, perhaps misunderstanding instructions from the Cali control tower, made a sudden left turn to the east for 90 seconds near the town of Ilioa, discussed the move among themselves, then ordered the plane's automatic pilot to turn back to the right. The detour took them directly into the San Jose mountain.

## Rawlings 'threw punches in cabinet'

Accra (Reuters) — Ghana's vice-president said yesterday he was kicked in the groin and punched by President Jerry Rawlings in a fight at a cabinet meeting.

"He gave me a terrible blow on the shoulder which sent me falling to the floor," Nkensen Arkaah told a news conference, which was also attended by diplomats. "He then attempted to pull me up by my shoulder in order to hit me further. He tore the shoulder of my jacket in the process," he said.

Vice-President Arkaah, co-leader of an opposition coalition, was recently quoted as saying that Cabinet meetings "had become the forum for corrupt and unscrupulous plans". At Thursday's Cabinet meeting Mr Rawlings confronted him.

Mr Arkaah, with his wife Marian by his side at the news conference, insisted he had been "savaged" by Mr Rawlings and "brought photographs as well as police and medical reports to prove it."

"In his frustration he kicked me a couple of times in the groin before members present were able to restrain him."

According to a government statement, the 68-year-old Mr Arkaah, who chaired all cabinet meetings, was presiding over Thursday's session when Mr Rawlings, 49, demanded that he prove the allegations of corruption. The President also insisted that, in the meantime, Mr Arkaah not "participate in Cabinet meetings. Mr Rawlings said he merely took his arm and insisted he leave."



# It's the end of the world as they know it

Seemingly sane people believe 1996 is the year of Armageddon. Could they be right? asks Paul Valiely

He seems an ordinary kind of chap, Gideon Scott, when he stops people on the streets of Leicester or Birmingham for a chat. He has common-sense views on politics. His aspirations for his children seem those of most normal parents. He wears ordinary-looking clothes – “which do not hide strange underwear”, he quips merrily. But Gideon Scott is not like the rest of us. He is waiting for the end of the world.

As the rest of the populace mull over their commonplace aspirations for the New Year, Gideon Scott has something rather more profound in mind. He is a member of one of dozens of millennial groups throughout Britain who are preparing for the End Time, which is expected 2,000 years after the coming of Christ. And since most scholars now reckon Christ was actually born in 4BC, that means that the two millennia will be up in 1996. Welcome to Armageddon.

All good wacky stuff? The French police do not seem to think so. Yesterday they published a report on the growth of millennial sects within France which sounded a note of alarm. It followed the 16 deaths there this month of members of the Solar Temple cult, 53 members of which also died the year before in Switzerland and Canada. The fear is that such deaths could happen with increasing frequency as the next millennium approaches.

The Order of the Solar Temple predicts a millennial cataclysm – directed by a chosen few of its ascended members from the star Sirius – and believes ritual sacrifice will save followers from the wrath of God. French police report that there are now some 173 sects in France with 400 branches and 130,000 members; many are New Age sects whose membership has grown significantly since the discovery of the AIDS virus by offering miracle cures; at least 15 are doomsday cults.

The authorities in Russia and Japan are concerned, too. The Aum Shinrikyo – which was blamed for the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway system – claims to have 10,000 members in Japan and as many as 30,000 across the Russian border, where its international radio station is based. Its members are not vulnerable no-hopers; they are professionals, technicians and graduates of Japan's top universities, and include one of the country's leading lawyers, a former member of the Japanese space

agency and serving members in the Japanese army. The group is organised into “ministries” that shadow government departments so as to be ready to seize power after the global war they predict for 1997.

How serious a threat is all this? Can those who manufacture nerve gas be compared with Love Corps Networking (California, in case you need to ask), which is currently promoting the revealed truths of Virginia Essene and Sheldon Nidle? Mr Nidle, who is in direct communication with time lords from Sirius, warns that in 1996 our solar system will enter a photon belt near the Pleiades, where it will pass through an “interdimensional rescue bubble”; this will thrust us into the fifth dimension and leave us in three days of total darkness (in which all electrical devices will stop operating and toilets will not flush) before we emerge as invigorated ethereal beings with incredible psychic abilities.

And how potent a threat is Apostle Keith Abraham? Apostle Keith is the white South African leader of an otherwise Afro-Caribbean church in Birmingham which gives us five years to repent before the world ends. “They never believed Jesus; they never believed the Bible,” he says. “Only Apostle Keith Abraham has heard the voice of God today.” His singular apocalyptic insight turns around the juxtaposition of the prophet Joel's “The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood” [Chapter 2, Verse 31] with a headline from *Today* newspaper on 9 February 1990 which proclaimed: “Moon

**The Aum group is ready to seize power after the global war they predict for 1997**

turns blood red” – a prophecy which the messenger singularly failed to comprehend, which no doubt explains its untimely closure early this year. “Beat Eternal Death! Join Sacred Africa today,” Apostle Keith urges.

What is causing all the perturbation is a unique conjunction. Somewhere around now – give or take a few decades, no one can be quite sure – an era ends in the astrological chart: the Age of Pisces gives way to



Waiting for Doomsday: Gideon Scott has had 12 children despite his belief that the world will end next year, or thereabouts

Photograph: Dan Chung/NewsTeam

the Age of Aquarius. At the same time The Millennium of Christian theology looms.

Exactly what the latter is remains a matter of some debate. A thousand years for Man is equal to one day for God (according to Isaiah). Since it is now 6,000 years since the Creation – keep geology out of this, please, we are talking serious fundamentalism here – the final “day” must be due to begin soon. The Book of Revelation sets this out in graphic detail: the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse appear and the wrath of God falls upon the world, then appears the Anti-Christ before Christ returns to defeat the forces of darkness and reign for 1,000 years, along with the saints and resurrected martyrs: there then follows a final battle with Satan and the final judgment of all the dead.

In the early years, Christians such as St Paul believed it all literally. But as time passed and the world continued, the Church developed a more allegorical understanding of the text. From time to time, however, an outbreak of literalism seized sections of the faithful. In AD156 the heretic Montanus declared himself the incarnation of the Holy Ghost and announced that a Third Age was imminent. There were

similar prophecies and movements in AD666 (666 was the sign of the Antichrist) and in the years 1000 (the first millennium), 1033 (millennium plus the years of Christ's life), 1656 (the number of years between the Creation and the Flood and 1666 (millennium plus Sign of Beast).

In every period of significant social change since, millennialism has reared its head. The Reformation produced the doomsday cults of the Taborites, Anabaptists and Moravian Brethren in Europe and the Independents and Fifth Monarchy Men in England. It re-emerged with the Enlightenment and the burgeoning of science – the growth of interest in measurement and quantification produced a literalism which spread to biblical scholarship. In the United States and Europe there came the Irvingites, Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses, all of them consumed with End-Time preoccupations.

Many were fixated upon exact measurements. The Millenarians settled upon 21 March 1843 for the end of the world. When it passed without event they recalculated to the end of 1844 – which elapsed with what the disbanding cult tagged The Great Disappointment. The

Jehovah's Witnesses lighted upon 1914 (the first of a number of disappointments for them) and the Jockey Club of Barcelona (don't ask) on 1921. And so it went on: the Moonies had 1968, the Church Universal and Triumphant 1990 and the Children of God 1993. The same year the Great White Brotherhood all went up a mountain in Russia on 14 November to await the Great Apocalypse and had to all troop down again the next morning.

It is amazing how they manage to talk their way out of it, says Damian Thompson, who is writing a book on millennialism. “They have an array of excuses: they averted it by prayer, Christ returned but only at a spiritual level, they got the dates wrong and it will happen later – though there is a limit to the number of times you can pull that one.”

Some of them have been caught out so many times that they have become wary. Elizabeth Clare Prophet, leader of the Church Universal and Triumphant, predicted cataclysm in 1990 and commanded thousands of followers to sell property and move to a vast ranch in Montana, where they had – somewhat faithlessly – built underground bunkers. Today her followers prefer not to be

so specific. “We don't know that something's going to happen,” says her press man, Murray Steinmann. “We're in the midst of a period of heavy returning karma which means a greater potential for the kind of scourges that have plagued mankind throughout history – war, famine, diseases, recession, ozone layer. ... But we believe we can lessen or mitigate the impact of karma by prayer, chanting and meditation to invoke the power of

**In every period of significant change millennialism has reared its head again**

God and the intercession of angels to come down and improve the life of our fellow man.”

The fundamentalist Christians want nothing so much as averting Armageddon. “What we do here on earth is fitting us for life in eternity,” says Gideon Scott, explaining why, despite the end of the world, he had 12 children by the age of 44. “Therefore, the fact that we think

some holocaust is imminent doesn't make much difference. To him the signs point to the inevitability of the imminent End Time. “The restoration of the state of Israel, the growth of a cashless society, the possibility of universal ID cards, the recent peace treaty to mark the end of wars in the Middle East – all these are predicted in the Bible as coming just before the Second Coming. It is setting the stage for a one-world dictator who will appear to be the saviour of mankind and will introduce a universal credit system but who will turn out to be the Antichrist. But the Bible doesn't give us a year and people who name one are clutching at straws.”

At the anti-cult organisation Christian Rescue, the director, Rev John Cella, is worried. He wants the British government to set up a register of new religious groups, much as yesterday's police report recommended for France. “Supernatural belief can be a very powerful force in a person's life – and if that's manipulated for any reason it can be very dangerous,” he says.

He too fears that the phenomenon is growing. “Around 700 new groups have appeared in the past 20 years, half of them in the past seven years.

Christian Rescue this year received 5,000 calls for help compared with only 3,000 the year before. The Aum cult in Tokyo shows that these things are not always inward focused: they can turn outwards and end with people out on the street looking to kill.”

At the London School of Economics, Professor Eileen Barker, the country's leading academic expert on cults, is more sanguine. “All religion can be wacky,” she shrugs. “People do believe in very strange things.”

But is the strange becoming more normal? Gideon Scott insists that people do not now regard him as odd. “The people I meet on the street all the time don't seem to think we're wacky; they might not believe what we say, but they don't think we're mad to believe it. A poll in the States recently showed that 40 per cent of the US population think Jesus is going to return. Obviously, England is different, but people are far more likely to believe now than they were 25 years ago.”

It seemed only too likely. “Happy New Year,” he said in conclusion. “Happy New Year,” I replied, but I was not quite certain we had the same thing in mind.

## Jo Brand's week

This is the time of year when somehow the former staff of the emergency clinic in south London where I used to work manage, through various confused phone calls, to get together at a restaurant to catch up on each others' lives, survey pictures of expanding families and chew over relationships, illnesses, job changes, holidays, the NHS and other general gossip. So I was rather perturbed to find us all sitting in a pizza place with a very loud jazz combo, which enabled us only to throw out very rushed snippets of information between “Route 66” and that tune from the Guinness advert.

Not only that, the band had distributed leaflets from which it appeared that they were sponsored by *Dianetics*. I, Ron Hubbard's multimillion-selling tome designed to change all our lives through the Church of Scientology.

I'm not happy about this. It's bad enough dodging Stepford husbands and wives in Tottenham Court Road as they try and lure you in for a personality test and then snare you into giving all your dosh away. It especially annoyed me because some of that dosh went to a band who, accomplished as they were, bugged up my annual reunion with all my nursing mates.

How charming to hear Brigitte Barriot described as “a battered turkey” by a columnist in the *Mirror* this week. He obviously considers the ex-sex symbol worthy of abuse because of her attempts to get involved with animal rights and naturally fixates on the bits that have drooped as age advances. We women always fall victim to any of our views being trivialised by references to our appearance, whether we be bimbos or bags. To paraphrase a famous speech, if you are a woman in this country do not be ugly, do not be fat, do not be old and do not have a big chest: no one will listen to a word you're saying.



Who needs an ex-sex symbol?

I would like to send my very best wishes to Garry Bushell, the *Sun*'s television critic, who finally appears to have his own show on television. I wish him every success. I know how difficult the first series can be and how nail-biting it is waiting for the reaction of the viewing public and the critics. As a rather green, naive performer back a couple of years ago when I first did telly, Garry's words of encouragement and wisdom made all the difference to me and his continued support – consisting of glowing, erudite comments (“erudite” means learned by the way, Garry), about how fat and ugly I am – has been a continuous source of joy to me. Cheer up Brigitte, at least he's not gunning for you. Still, I expect he'll get a good review in the *Sun*.

So Princess Diana is regularly seeing Susie Orbach, the therapist and author of *Fat is a Feminist Issue*, which in a nutshell advises women not to diet and they will fall into a natural eating pattern. I tried this and put on about three stone. I met Susie Orbach at an awards ceremony and made the mistake of doing a joke about her book. I said I'd read it, got half-way through and eaten it. Susie was not amused. Sorry, Susie. Still,



perhaps we'll see the princess balloon a bit.

Scientists have made another breakthrough on the dieting front. Hurrah, I say, as millions of teenage girls prepare to become more like knitting needles than ever. This latest breakthrough consists of a nasal spray that sends a message to your brain that you're not hungry after all. Calm down, though, it's not going to be available before the next century. I suppose until then we'll all have to continue to rely on that other message which so many charming men out and about on the streets send: that we're horrible in look at.



Who needs nasty neighbours?

Princess Anne is unhappy about the fact that an executive village may be built on her doorstep, inviting cries of that very irritating acronym, “Nimby!” from various sections of the

media. I can't help but agree with her. Who wants to live near a load of pulled-up, snobbish, self-satisfied bobs? Not her, which is maybe why she spends so little time with her family. But she'd almost rather have a community home for those with mental health problems near her. I know I would.

Everyone seems to be doing a review of the year which takes in the major events. So I thought I'd do a rather sad review of the year which takes in major events. The year started badly as I spent about a week in bed in Cornwall swooning like Elizabeth Barrett Browning with a dose of bronchitis, while all my friends enjoyed themselves in the pub and threw me the odd pork pie. It was then on to writing the next series for Channel 4 and I spent several months, no doubt like Elizabeth Barrett Browning, staring at a blank piece of paper.

I asked the bloke who sets up my tours to book me into some small theatres so I could try out some new jokes, only to discover on the first night at Watford in front of 1,400 people that I was not going to get away with experimental material about cottage cheese (unlike Elizabeth Barrett Browning, I suspect). The show somehow got written, but by the time I was ready to make the series I was so shattered I could barely raise my head from the bed. I seriously considered “doing a Stephen Fry”.

I got through the filming with a mere black eye, having hit myself in the face with a machine gun (don't ask). After a brief sojourn in Edinburgh and 800 bottles of lager, I began to prepare for my tour by looking at a blank piece of paper again. I am beginning to wonder why there are so many blank pieces of paper in my life. Anyway, Happy New Year to everyone, especially my mum.

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## Bravery at the lakeside leaves its powerful legacy

Michael Mee knew the risks of trying to rescue 11-year-old Tracey Patterson after she fell through thin ice on Thursday. He was a fireman. In his 26 years' experience in the fire brigade, he would have encountered and been trained for such situations. He had already seen another passer-by - Jack Crawshaw, who may have been less aware of the dangers - try to cross the ice and also plunge into the water.

In short, as the scene unfolded at the lake in Hemsworth Park, West Yorkshire, Michael Mee would have realised that he was likely to fail and that he could die in the attempt to fish Tracey out of the water. He was not required professionally to put his life on the line: he was off duty. Tracey was no relation: she was probably not even known to her would-be rescuers. Yet still he did all in his power to save her. He died, along with the others.

It was shocking to see the pictures of this tragedy, to hear the tales of how the emergency services tried for hours to resuscitate the victims. Reading the accounts conveys the sheer determination of the emergency services to defeat nature and bring the freezing bodies back to life. But even their will power was not enough to revive the dead.

In the end we were left with a sense of great waste, of lives lost for no tangible gain. Yet there was also a strong sense of nobility achieved even in defeat and death. The rescuers were not just brave: mountain climbers are brave. Michael Mee and Jack Crawshaw

additionally harnessed their courageous natures to an altruistic end and demonstrated an extraordinary capacity for self-sacrifice.

Their heroism inevitably confronts each of us with a string of questions: "Would I have gone on to the ice? Would I have been one of those people who felt they must help because otherwise I would not be able to live with myself?" Many of us fear that we would have hesitated, stood at the side, retreated from the danger - paralysed by a combination of fear, cowardice and a sense of self-preservation. Indeed, the honest might admit to wondering whether, in retrospect, they really would have wanted the courage of Michael Mee and Jack Crawshaw, given the outcome.

Photographs published this week of Paul Brighton have graphically illustrated the dilemma of having our bravery tested. He was the classic "have-a-go" hero, the type whose death is so often the subject of huge headlines. Mr Brighton was relatively lucky. When he tackled a gang that had just shattered his bathroom window, his skull was smashed by a bucket filled with concrete. He survived, but only just - his skull pieced together by surgeons.

Most people can tell a story of their bravery being tested, of a moment when they have had to make a split-second decision that may then preoccupy them years later. It might involve choosing whether or not to intervene when a stranger was threatened by thugs. How many people have, for example, passed by a



couple, when the woman looked like she was about to be beaten up, and done nothing? The trial of the two boys convicted of murdering Jamie Bulger highlighted the number of people who failed to intervene as the young child was dragged crying through a busy shopping centre.

And then there is the question of which of us is actually prepared for dealing with an emergency. It is all very well having courage, but skill is also vital. A willingness to help someone choking on a fish bone is not much use to someone untrained in first-aid techniques. How many people can confidently give mouth-to-mouth resuscitation or, if they can swim, know how to rescue someone who is drowning?

Courage and bravery are not always about reacting in an emergency. Gordon Wilson, who died earlier this year, proved that. He showed his bravery, altruism and self-sacrifice by the way in which he overcame his bitterness and spent years using the death of his daughter, Marie, in the 1987 Enniskillen Poppy Day massacre, to further the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. Could we bear to be so forgiving?

Likewise, the defiant attitude of Jaymee Bowen, initially known as Child B during the national row over whether to fund her treatment for leukaemia, shows how courage is often needed for more than a moment. She is still fighting an illness that, more than likely, will claim her life. But her manner has given

fresh hope to children in a similar situation.

Michael Mee and Jack Crawshaw passed their test. In doing so they challenged a great many preconceptions about what has happened to British society. We are told that individualism is no longer fettered by a commitment to the common good. Families seem to be breaking down, society fragmenting, bonds are weakening between people. And the decline in religious belief - indicating a loss of faith in the existence of an after-life - seems to suggest that people would be less willing these days to put their lives on the line for others.

Yet, despite all this, these men felt compelled to do what they did. Courage and altruism - WB Yeats called it the "delirium of the brave" - seemed to eclipse other pressures to walk away. Sometimes, to run away from a moral imperative is to leave oneself tormented for years to come by a sense of inadequacy and failure.

Philip Lawrence, the London headteacher, who this week was named Man of the Year in a Radio 4 listeners' poll, understood this. When he discovered that one of his pupils was being set upon by a gang, he did not hang back. His bravery led to his being stabbed to death.

We stand in awe of such people, who seem perfectly normal, just like us, until they are called upon to do the extraordinary. Would we measure up to the task? Their example gives us the power to believe that we could.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Lessons on prison policy

From Mrs Rachel Palmer

Sir: Professor Justin Brooks (letter, 29 December) must be right to warn of the dangers of following the US model of prisons and to call for clear, humane and pragmatic policies here in UK.

Twenty years ago, working for a time with the prison service in Hong Kong, I was amazed to find the inmates of prisons unlocked all day and engaged in full-time work obtained by the service. This was in sharp contrast to the situation in prisons in the UK.

We, at Holloway, have had a pilot project for more than two years with Reed Employment that provides meaningful paid activity for the women, and the chance for them to learn and develop skills: yet for much of this year facilities have lain idle because there were no officers available to run a regime.

Perhaps we have more to learn from the East?

Yours sincerely,  
RACHEL PALMER  
London, W14  
28 December

The writer is chairman of the board of visitors at Holloway women's prison.

From Mr A. N. Johnston, J.P.  
Sir: When Lord Whitelaw was Home Secretary, he told the House of Commons that "conditions in many of Her Majesty's prisons are an affront to a civilised society and a continued threat to law and order".

In the light of your report (28 December) that the Prison Service is to jettison its policy on reducing cell overcrowding, and of the recent revelations of the conditions in Holloway, is there any hope that the present Home Secretary will learn from his predecessor before it is too late?

Yours faithfully,  
A. N. JOHNSTON  
Sawston, Cambridgeshire  
28 December

### Cheap US beef

From Mr P. A. Richards

Sir: In reply to the Rev David Flavell's (letter, 20 December), I can provide at least two good reasons why American beef is cheaper than British.

In the first place, farmers in the US are allowed to use steroids and hormone growth promoters - an aid which was denied British farmers nearly 10 years ago due to pressure from consumer protection groups. Second, they feed their cattle in huge lots - thousands in the same compound - which would make our welfare bodies extremely excited if allowed in this country.

Yours faithfully,  
P. A. RICHARDS  
Penfold Farm  
Llangennech, Dyfed

### Normal service

From Mr F. M. Steiner

Sir: The public services receive so many brickbats, that credit should be given where it is due. On this foggy freezing morning, the post, the newspaper and the milk had all been delivered by 8am, and my trains to London and back ran on time.

Yours faithfully,  
F. M. STEINER  
Deddington, Oxfordshire  
27 December

### Seeds and cycleways: faith in the future

From Mr Christopher Padley

Sir: Peter Popham unfavourably compares the sums allocated by the Millennium Fund to the Llanelli coastal path, the New Gardens seed bank and national cycleways, with the refusal to aid Cardiff opera house ("No daring, no imagination, just cycle paths", 23 December). It is he who lacks imagination.

What better expresses a "faith in the future" than to secure for it the incalculable treasure of tens of millions of years of plant evolution? This is a store of natural wonders that makes a single building, no matter how grand, as nothing. What can better witness our aesthetic discernment than that we cherish our landscapes? Can a building, the work of feeble humans, begin to compare with the natural creation of land, sky and sea?

Modern-day champions of the arts, such as Mr Popham, would build temples to the muses while destroying the gardens of the gods.

Yours sincerely,  
CHRISTOPHER PADLEY  
Market Rasen, Lincolnshire

From Mr Michael Miller

Sir: Peter Popham is quite wrong to suggest that cycle paths and seed banks do not bear witness to our faith in the future, for both point to an acknowledgement of our past failures and some small attempt to rectify them. The former relates to our damaging, polluting and antisocial reliance on the motor car; and the latter to the devastating effect of uncontrolled destruction and abuse of the natural world for commercial gain. The best millennium "monuments" we can have are those that point to the errors of the past and offer solutions for the future.

I too disagree with the commission's decision regarding the Cardiff opera house: but for your headline to declare "No daring, no imagination, just cycle paths" is to display a naivety and narrowness of vision equal to that shown by the commission with regard to the Cardiff project.

Yours faithfully,  
MICHAEL MILLER  
Bridge of Don, Aberdeen

From Mr Lars Breiner

Sir: The good burgers of Cardiff should take the time to visit Gothenburg in Sweden, because that city has recently opened a stupendous musical theatre in the old port - and they brought the project in under budget, to boot!

Gothenburg is usually associated with football, Volvo cars, SKF ballbearings and Hasselblad cameras, but it is also the musical centre of the Nordic

countries. Decade upon decade, its citizens have struggled on with a theatre built in the 1850s. Now they have what Cardiff wants - within budget and on the waterfront.

Yours sincerely,  
LARS BREINER  
Richmond, Surrey

From Mr Kerstin Lindman-Strafford

Sir: Some 18 months ago, I visited Cardiff with a group of other foreign journalists from the Foreign Press Association. We were shown the Cardiff Bay development; needless to say, impressive in scope and size. But it occurred to some of us that the plans that had been submitted for the opera house appeared to ignore surrounding buildings in an area where predominantly red brick is used. Any development should, presumably, consider the aesthetic impact of the whole.

Of greater urgency now is the matter of an international airport for Cardiff. A number of us could be heard muttering: what use is a grand opera house if international singers and conductors cannot fly in directly from European countries and elsewhere, but have to rock on a so-called express train from London?

Yours faithfully,  
KERSTIN LINDMAN-STRAFFORD  
London, SW19

### Dangers in the mountains

From Mr Brian Hend

Sir: Victoria Pybus ("The difference between hill-walking and mountaineering: ice", 18 December) extols the thrills and challenges of climbing the Scottish mountains in winter. There are dangers as well as delights in winter climbing. Conditions in the Scottish mountains in winter tend to be Arctic rather than Alpine. Small avalanches are common and can cause disastrous falls.

Many popular climbing areas are not covered by avalanche warning systems. One-third of the deaths due to avalanches last winter occurred in areas not covered by avalanche warning services.

Two years ago, my daughter was on an introductory snow and ice course, under instruction by a qualified member of the British Association of Mountain Guides. The leader took the party up a snow gully on Lliach, Torridon. A small wind-slab avalanche dislodged the climbers near the top of the gully and they fell back down the gully. My daughter Kathy died from the head injuries she received.

A fatal accident inquiry was held in Dingwall last March under Sheriff Principal Douglas

Risk. Many matters of public interest were raised: standards of safety for parties under instruction, availability of avalanche warnings, co-ordination of mountain rescue efforts, etc. The Sheriff Principal's findings are awaited. It is not clear why the publication of his report has been delayed.

Meanwhile, others may be at greater risk than my daughter was, particularly in the current weather conditions. The inexperienced need good instruction, but there is no check on the standards of mountaineering schools. There is nothing to stop anyone setting up a mountaineering school. No qualifications are required, there is no system of registration and there is no external assessment of standards of instruction and safety.

I have had too much pleasure from the mountains to discourage climbers, but too much pain not to dread this winter's inevitable fresh toll of tragedy. I hope lessons may be learnt from my daughter's accident to help reduce the risks for other climbers.

Yours sincerely,  
BRIAN HEND  
Lorton, Cumbria  
27 December

### Our first-class Royal Mail

From Mr Ken Wright

Sir: Your readers can be reassured that Royal Mail does not "deliberately delay" its first delivery ("Postal union sets a deadline", 26 December) "to accommodate post that should be sent out later". Quite the opposite happens.

Royal Mail's investment in technology, combined with improvements in moving mail across the country, has resulted in a substantial increase in the volume of mail arriving in time for the first delivery.

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But let me make it quite clear: second deliveries will continue. No second delivery has been withdrawn and none will be, anywhere in the UK.

The improvements to service standards do have resourcing implications. Rising mail volumes on first delivery have resulted in increased use of part-time staff. We are presently in discussions with the Communication Workers Union to seek new work around the second delivery which we believe will further enhance our service and maintain employment security for our employees.

Yours faithfully,  
KEN WRIGHT  
Assistant Managing Director  
Royal Mail  
London, EC1  
28 December

### IRA fears repeat of 1921 treaty

From Ms Patricia Moynihan

Sir: After reading today's letters about "arms decommissioning", I would like to point out that the nervousness of the IRA and Sinn Féin regarding the handing over of their weapons before peace talks can properly begin originates in a much earlier process involving Eamon De Valera, Michael Collins, Lloyd George and Winston Churchill in the treaty negotiations of 1921.

Before these talks could begin, it was a precondition laid down by the British that the members of the IRA should come out of hiding and make themselves known. This they did in July of that year.

By this act, they lost any strength of successful resistance they might have made should the treaty negotiations fail to secure a united Ireland. This was, indeed, what happened.

Sinn Féin made it clear two years ago that present difficulties had arisen directly from the problems of the 1921 agreement, although the British Government consistently denies this. It might help towards a better understanding between the two parties if the problems of the 1921 peace talks process were honestly addressed within the framework of the proposed talks.

A degree of trust must be established and such an approach might ultimately prove helpful.

Yours sincerely,  
PATRICIA MOYNIHAN  
Twynford, Hampshire  
29 December

### Urban landings

From Mr Terence Davidson

Sir: Hong Kong Kai Tak "the world's last remaining international airport slap bang in the middle of town" (29 December)? Ever heard of Heathrow? Yours faithfully,  
TERENCE DAVIDSON  
Twickenham, Middlesex

## DAVID AARONOVITCH

### Driving me mad



For many years, the maverick US Senator William Proxmire used to confer the "Golden Fleece" award on the most useless piece of research commissioned in the preceding 12 months. Famous winners included the project set up to answer the question: "Why do people not like very long queues?" and one looking into the sea life of the Japanese quail.

Some folk will believe the AA is angling for this award with its £145,000 project, announced this week, to uncover the behavioural differences between men and women drivers. The psychologists at Reading University charged with this task will not want for commonsensical observations from friends and acquaintances. After all, most of us know all about other people's behaviour when it comes to driving. Differences? Of course there are differences.

Consider first this month's cases of the flashing gaffer and the nude Parisienne. Matey thought it would be pleasant for women if he drove alongside them on the M27 at 80mph and indicated his willy. His victim calmly took his number and called the police. Madam, on the other hand, caused a six-car pile-up simply by driving her car while naked. Proving either that women are far calmer and less excitable drivers than men, or that men's reflexes are much quicker - or (most likely) that La Française's breasts were a great deal more attractive than his lodger.

It used to be much harder to make such comparisons. The only women who drove were swimmers, or those trained on ambulances during the war, while all men - however feeble-minded - were expected to get behind the wheel. But today more women than men are on the roads, and it is possible to make useful generalisations.

Here's the biggest. Men are aggressive, dangerous and fast. Women are defensive, irritating and slow. That car which roars up behind you, sits six inches off your tail, flashes its lights and then overtakes - straight into the path of an oncoming juggernaut being driven by a drunken Pole - that car has a

man behind the wheel. But the other car, the one meandering at exactly the speed limit in the centre of the road, while its driver sits hunched over the wheel looking neither behind nor to the side - that is a woman driver. Men cause accidents, women cause delays.

Take road rage. Several times this summer I witnessed men carrying on preposterous duels on busy roads and getting out at lights to shout at each other. "You're lucky you've got kids in the car," one teenager yelled at a middle-aged rager, "otherwise I'd thump you one."

In the heat men turned nasty. But something happened to the women as well. Not rage so much as spite. Women suffering from Road Spite would, for instance, give the impression they were making way for another motorist to pull out and join a line of traffic, and then, at the last moment, instead close the gap. Or they would approach green traffic lights very, very slowly - and accelerate away just as they changed, leaving everyone else stuck.

Now that vast numbers of women buy cars for themselves this difference is being increasingly manifested in the names that vehicles are marketed under. The Hugas and the Charmians of the ad industry know a thing or two when it comes to appealing to our gender specifics. So for men we have the Ford Probe, the Furio, Volcano, Scorpio and, best of all, the Ferrari Testarossa (which presumably means Red Hot Balls in Italian). I intend to go a step further and make a fortune by marketing a turbocharged Reliant, aimed at the younger buyer, under the name of the Fuky 2.

As for the ladies, they have the Prelude, the Synergie, the Fiesta, any make of Volvo and the delightfully suggestive Clio. Here my play will be to push sales of the Nissan Womb - a people carrier with the most advanced safety features. Once in, you'll never want to come out.

You see, it's all so obvious. And all I need for my new car ideas is a little starting capital. Something like £145,000 would just about cover it. But where can you get that kind of money?

### QUOTE UNQUOTE

Labour's tragedy is its long-term failure to construct a consistent and coherent theory of government which matches the new reality with the old ethic - Roy Hattersley, Labour's former deputy leader.

In my bones, I don't think the Government is going to get through the next year - Paddy Ashdown, Liberal Democrat leader.

It is becoming daily more apparent that the British government has no intention whatsoever of advancing or, indeed, of maintaining the peace process in Ireland - Mitchell McConnell, chairman of Sinn Féin.

The law today, at least in criminal cases, uses all its enormous intellectual power to weigh down on those who get caught. But they are rarely the really important criminals inextricably ingrained in the structure of society - Peter Ustinov.

I used to think that maybe drink had destroyed my life, but that was dramatic nonsense and temporary gloom. Without alcohol I could have been a shop assistant, a business executive or a lone bachelor bank clerk - Jeffrey Bernard.

I don't believe you have to be religious or Christian to be good - the Archbishop of Canterbury.





## His course is set for a historic mission

There are no paintings in the Commons office of the leader of the Opposition. The single, rather bedraggled plant that used to stand in the corner has long gone. It is as if the leader has resolved never to make himself comfortable in a job whose sole purpose is to secure a completely different one.

When he moved in, in July 1994, Tony Blair chose the less prepossessing of the two offices available to the Opposition; the grander upstairs room previously occupied by John Smith is now John Prescott's. As it happens, this plainness is deliberate: the room is a symbolic reminder to those around him that this isn't a job to get used to.

And whatever the result of the election, Blair isn't going to be there for long. It is unfashionable but sobering, given the party's consistent 30-point lead in the opinion polls, to consider for just a moment what hopes and fears will be extinguished if he fails, finally, to become Prime Minister. It would certainly be the end of his own political career. In the Kinnock era, moreover, there was a choice of leaders in waiting. A Blair defeat, by contrast, could be the end of the road. Having run out of allies, Labour might prove finally to have been unable to outlive the century that gave birth to it.

It is a measure of Blair's achievement so far that no one in his own party now believes that this is going to happen. History will surely judge that while 1994 was the year Labour merely chose a new leader, 1995 was the year it visibly transformed itself — as anyone who experienced the electric atmosphere of those Clause IV meetings of party members in

This was the year when Labour's new leader needed to prove himself. In doing so, he has earned his party the right to govern once more. By Donald Macintyre

hotel conference rooms up and down the country can testify. At St Helens back in March, for example, you could feel, amid the laughter, the ripple of slightly guilty self-recognition that went through the audience as Blair recalled how one party member had complained to him: "Even Tories are starting to vote for us now."

But there was an even more radioactive moment when one party member in his sixties asked Blair bluntly if he was "just doing all this

A Blair defeat could be the end of the road. Labour might prove finally to have been unable to outlive the century that gave birth to it

to win?" Well, he replied, that wasn't such a bad aspiration for a leader. But no, it wasn't the only reason — or even the "primary" reason. It was more that Labour would not win by saying things that it did not believe in.

This goes to the heart of why Blair has been so infuriated by what he perceives to be the conclusions of the compulsively watchable recent BBC 2 series *The Wilderness Years*: that

idealistic socialism is what Tony Benn stood for; idealism that has had to be ditched to make the party electable again. It is true, of course, that since long before he became leader, Blair was more focused than any of his front-rank colleagues on the cold statistics of the electoral mountain Labour had to climb. Was it not Blair who, famously unimpressed by opinion polls, repeatedly pointed out in private that in the 1992 election the party had secured a lower share of the vote than when it was defeated in 1979? But at meeting after meeting in the spring, when Blair was successfully cajoling his party into replacing Clause IV, his message was that there was more to this than mere winning; that it was time to end the historic conflict between what Labour had seen as its "principles" and what it had to do, or rather sell, in order to win power. What Blair set about this spring was to join, for the first time since the end of the 1945 government, principles to practice, the party's activists to its supporters in the country, and himself to the party — or, as he would term it, the head to the body.

As he suggested in the most important article he wrote in 1995 — an *Observer* piece earlier this month — this was more than a generation overdue. Some within the Party, he said, had vainly tried in the late Fifties to force Labour to adapt to the social and economic changes that had

already taken place. What actually happened after the 1959 election defeat was that the modernisers of their day, such as Douglas Jay and the then leader, Hugh Gaitskill, promoted a new Clause IV only to be beaten back by an alliance of the unreconstructed left and the right-wing trade union barons on whom they had been forced to rely to keep the left at bay.

There is an interesting point here. Much of the genesis of Blair's ideology belongs to the revisionist right of that period. But not all. Those in the Campaign Group who accuse him of being the most right-wing leader Labour ever had should recall that it was the centre left that were historically most distrustful of the power the union barons wielded in the party. As John Rentoul points out in his biography of Blair, Barbara Castle was in favour of one-member, one-vote democracy in the Forties. And it was Castle who, more than a decade before Thatcher, had the courage to try to reform the unions, only to be shamefully deserted by Jim Callaghan and the Labour right.

What the Clause IV meetings showed, ironically, is the gift that Tony Benn, one of Blair's sternest critics, once generously ascribed to another great enemy, Margaret Thatcher — that of politician as "teacher". What Blair's triumphant change to the party constitution seemed to leave open, however, was how far the new ideology — nei-

ther "old left nor new right" as Blair continually describes it — translated itself into policy.

That doubt was most graphically expressed in a brilliant Steve Bell cartoon which showed Bambi on horseback trailing a banner with the slogan "Principle Liberated from Particular Policy Prescriptions", a phrase Blair had actually used shortly after becoming leader. It's true that Blair had always thought the problem with Labour was that it had too many policies — for everything from "stray cats to world disarmament" as he once put it — rather than too few. But there is a danger of exaggerating the alleged absence of a programme: a Britain in which state schools are to set new standards of excellence, and where there is widespread constitutional reform, a minimum wage, a radically reformed welfare state, a new regime for the monopolies, a start for the young unemployed and a reformed tax system, is a very different Britain.

But leadership involves strategy as well as ideas. Blair does not underestimate John Major's ability to win elections and advise his colleagues not to do so either. The positive press he has had (think how the tabloids would have treated Neil Kinnock sunning himself in Australia while Britain froze) hasn't been a mere accident. He risked internal criticism to speak at Rupert Murdoch's famous seminar in July, partly

because it was an unrivalled international platform; but partly because he knows the *Sun* is the paper that can do him most damage. He has played his own part in getting on warm terms with Lord Rothermere, proprietor of the *Daily Mail*. But he did deal with neither man.

Part of his strength is that he remains solidly grounded in a life outside politics. He retains old friends, such as his university mentor Peter Thomson, with whom he is currently staying on holiday in

It was Barbara Castle who had the courage to try to reform the unions, only to be deserted by Jim Callaghan and the Labour right

Australia. He goes home at night, frequently leaving at 7pm to see his family, and as a matter of routine getting back to Islington between evening votes at the Commons; like Thatcher, he is not in love with the Palace of Westminster. Ferociously in demand — not least in the world of big business — he dines out perhaps three times a week. He reads, having recently finished Roy Jen-

kins' biography of Gladstone. He still follows the rock scene. He plays tennis with his normal fierce competitiveness and he still takes his children swimming regularly. He retains an ability to laugh which Kinnock began to lose in the grueling period of his own leadership. He is, for example, a cruelly accurate mimic, able in private to take off most of the shadow Cabinet to a tee.

And there is a pleasant informality about him. He hates wearing black ties, or indeed any kind of tie when he is off-duty. His emphasis in his speech to the Murdoch seminar in Australia, on breaking down the barriers that prevent Britain becoming a true meritocracy, reflect his healthy and rather Thatcher-like mistrust of the crustier aspects of the British establishment.

This raises the big question still lingering in the minds of some in the party: how genuinely radical is Tony Blair? By seizing the ground of "one-nation" politics he believes he has given the centre, as well as the left-of-centre, a new ideology. That centrism inevitably in its comparison with the one-nation Tories whose politics in several respects overlap with his.

But Blair believes there is a fundamental difference: while they are paternalists locked in a losing battle to retain and conserve institutions such as the welfare state, he is about change and transformation. His capacity to modernise Britain as he wants remains untested; all that can be said is that if he can do the country half of what he did this year to his party, he will be well on the way to fulfilling what he sees as his historic mission.

## A week of white-outs and black-outs

Rural Shetland has been reflecting on how people coped before electricity arrived, says Tom Angus



Hydro repair men are like lifeboat crews Photograph: Graeme Storey

CUNNINGBURGH — Friday 29 December. It is a brilliantly sunny day. Peat smoke drifts in a light northerly wind; voices of children sledging, and of crofters feeding sheep, carry a long way. A day between weather, the old folk would say, and a Met forecast of more snow to come would seem to bear out the saying.

After a week of white-outs, power cuts and an invasion of media folk from the mainland, the thought of more snow appeals most people up here in Shetland. After the great snowfall and gales on Christmas Eve, all roads were blocked. Some people were without electricity — and thus without heating — for five days.

Various life-threatening situations were averted by helicopter ambulance flights or by less-publicised practical community efforts. Neighbours' fires thawed the chilled, and small generators, carried through drifts, powered central heating pumps on a rota basis. Rural water supplies, relying largely on diesel pumps, dried up when operatives were unable to refuel tanks. Lifeboats, fishing vessels, tractors and four-wheel drive vehicles fetched essential supplies.

With terrestrial television and VHF radio out of action, our news has been beamed all week by satellite or via medium-wave radio. Unable to get about, we had no idea how things were over the hill, but thanks to satellite — once the power came on — we could watch, on our screens, a local crofter feeding sheep. It felt unreal. You sat and watched a neat young chap who'd travelled hundreds of miles from his TV base interviewing a parka-clad snowbound couple and wondered which trouble spot he'd be covering the next day. But it has been, by and large, a miserable week, not improved by the fact that Christmas dinners had to be abandoned or postponed.

It could be argued that much of the week's hardship was caused by over-reliance on electricity. When the North of Scotland Hydro Electric Board inaugurated rural electrification schemes in the 1950s it was hailed as the bringer of a splendid amenity. In the euphoria of the time, the Shetland weather factor, featuring savage winds, was forgotten and so men laboured at digging holes for wooden poles to hold up the wires to carry this marvellous unseen power source from a diesel generating station in Lerwick all over the islands.

These overhead power lines are, however, subjected to terrific tempest. The sturdiest cross-rod-socketed pole can stand just so much. Many poles stand in soft peat, which makes ideal fuel but provides a poor base for a power line. Poles are blown over, the line falls down and what has become for many people a lifeline is broken.

The coming of North Sea oil and a massive rise in Shetland's population — from 17,000 to 23,000 within a few years — led to a housing boom. Many houses, whole estates in some cases, including sheltered housing, rely on electric heating. For many people, hypothermia is kept at bay by a thin wire stretching many miles over the type of wild, exposed terrain much admired by tourists. The Hydro repair line men we class along with lifeboat and rescue helicopter crews; but they can do only so much to combat the forces of nature. When you live in the country you must expect power cuts and do what you can to look after yourself.

There would have been very little to report in the way of emergency stories before rural Shetland got mains electricity. Country dwellers were largely self-sufficient. Every household used peat as a heat source for cooking and heating. Winter saw food stores laid in for animals and humans: salted and dried fish and mutton, home-grown potatoes and vegetables

(including the hardy Shetland cabbage), sacks of oatmeal and flour and so on, meant that there was plenty to eat even after weeks of isolation.

For lighting, there were paraffin lamps, with the Tilley variety lighting the house wonderfully and giving off a fair heat, too. Fastened to the chimneys of some houses were wind-driven dynamos, used for charging the batteries essential for radio reception. People listened to the news, the weather forecast and, on Saturday evenings, to the Scottish dance music programme.

Never mind the comparison between pre- and post-war days. What we're all pondering this week is the future. And the talk is of generators. A little one would be a most acceptable present. Even peat or other solid-fuel central heating relies on electricity to work the water circulation pump; but a small generator could power this pump, light your house and keep freezer and fridge in action. At present, there is a big run on generators on the island, and the word is that they are sold out.

Whether those who are swearing to acquire this lifesaver will keep their vows is another matter. Some probably will, only to let their generator lie for months in a garage, unused, unstarted, and out of fuel.

One thing is certain: we have not had our last power cut. The sooner folk accept that fact the sooner they can be persuaded to provide for the inevitable, and we could be thinking of others who cannot help themselves. Up here, we have a multi-million pound special fund built up from oil revenues, which has financed, among other things, a series of leisure centres complete with swimming pools. Splashing out on back-up generators for our care centres and sheltered housing would be money well spent.

The writer is a retired teacher.

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## obituaries / gazette

## Professor Sir William Trethowan

Bill Trethowan was a psychiatrist and a man of multifarious talents, with a generosity of spirit and a personal style well fitted to deploy them. He could have become famous as a musician; alternatively he would have made an outstanding diplomat. If he had wished to amass a fortune he could have done so many times over in Harley Street. Fortunately for medicine he had other ideas.

His ancestors came from Cawsand in Cornwall. At his home in Hampstead he had an orthopaedic surgeon at Guy's Hospital, had installed an organ and held regular concerts. He died when Bill was 16, whereupon his wife enrolled as a medical student. Bill Trethowan and his mother graduated in the same year.

Trethowan was educated at Oundle School and Clare College, Cambridge. On reaching Cambridge he made straight for the Footlights, and became the music director. People still re-

call the 1938 May Week revue *Pure and Simple*, directed by George (Dadie) Rylands and Robert Helpmann, for which Trethowan composed music and conducted the band. At about this time he met his future wife Pam Waters, an actress recently out of Lamda. She sang in cabarets accompanied by a band called the Arimathians, in which Bill Trethowan was a regular accompanist and conductor. He became renowned as a keyboard player and jazz trumpeter. They married in London, and Trethowan graduated in medicine at Guy's Hospital in 1943.

After army service as a medical specialist he trained in psychiatry at the Maudsley and Massachusetts General Hospital, and spent a year as a teaching fellow at Harvard before joining the staff of the Department of Psychiatry at Manchester, serving under the eccentric and scholarly Professor E.W. Anderson. Five years

later, in 1956, he was elected to the Chair of Psychiatry in the University of Sydney. There he made a considerable impact, but before long he was head-hunted by Birmingham University, where he was Professor of Psychiatry from 1962 until retirement in 1982.

In Manchester, Sydney and Birmingham Trethowan did much to advance the standards of psychiatry. He was a first-class clinician and teacher, and had the imagination to see what was required to break new ground, first by extending the teaching in psychiatry provided for medical students (and thus for future general practitioners and clinical specialists), and second by planning comprehensive postgraduate training of psychiatrists. In Britain the Royal College of Psychiatrists acquired its Royal Charter in 1971. Trethowan was one of those who worked both in committee and behind the scenes to ensure the new college would

reach the highest standards of professional excellence. He was appointed its first Chief Examiner and worked almost single-handedly to set up the examination for membership, which proved entirely successful.

Meantime other developments were afoot, and Trethowan was again among the leading agents of change. Psychiatry began to move closer to medicine and away from its sequestered location in huge mental hospitals. Psychiatric units in general hospitals were established and community services planned. People could be treated in general hospitals for their serious mental illnesses, and now also for the common neuroses and the emotional dimensions of psychiatric illness. The 1974 reorganisation of the National Health Service brought far-reaching changes in the balance between hospital medicine and care and treatment in the community.



Trethowan: like Figaro

In these evolutionary processes Trethowan possessed a remarkable ability to analyse complex medical and administrative issues, listen closely to what was said, and reconcile conflicting viewpoints. He was both a strategic thinker and a tactician, very articulate, and a believer in plain words. It was hardly surprising that he was given ever wider responsibilities.

He was Dean of Medicine in Birmingham for six years, and became an adviser to central government through membership, and often chairmanship, of important committees in the DHSS. He had other national roles with the General Medical Council and the University Grants Committee. Again the days were hectic. For 10 years he chaired the advisory committee appointed to establish a medical school in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Like Figaro, he was here, there and everywhere. He relished his many missions, but unlike Figaro he was no factotum, and self-interest was not his motive.

He had little time to become personally involved in research, but he wrote several papers on educational topics. He developed an interest in unusual psychiatric syndromes and social anthropological themes, producing the authoritative account of the Couvade Syndrome, in which husbands of

pregnant women sometimes develop symptoms characteristic of approaching labour. He wrote on music and mental illness, including an authoritative review of the mental illness of Ivor Gurney, the poet and musician, who developed paranoid schizophrenia. Outside work his interests were not restricted to music – he had an informed interest in natural history (and a marvellous butterfly collection) and for some years was a good gardener. His family life provided an extremely lively background, packed with challenge, debating and debunking, hectic, heart-warming, generous and hospitable.

In 1985 his wife Pam died suddenly after several years of failing health. There followed a period of profound sadness, but in 1988 his marriage to Heather Dalton brought strength and, perhaps for the first time in his life, the hectic days were over: he was happy,

contented and at peace with himself.

Robert Cawley

**William Henry Trethowan**, psychiatrist: born London 3 June 1917; *Psychiatric Registrar*, Maudsley Hospital 1948-50; *Psychiatric Resident*, Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard 1951; *Lecturer and Senior Lecturer*, Manchester University 1951-56; *Professor of Psychiatry*, University of Sydney 1956-62; *Professor of Psychiatry*, Birmingham University 1962-82 (*Emeritus*); *Consultant Adviser in Psychiatry*, DHSS 1964-78; *Chairman*, Standing Mental Health Advisory Committee 1968-74; *Chief Examiner*, Royal College of Psychiatrists 1971-74; *CBE* 1975; *Chairman*, Medical Advisory Committee, Chinese University of Hong Kong 1976-86; *Kt* 1980; married 1941 Pamela Waters (died 1985; one son, two daughters), 1988 Heather Dalton (nee Gardner); died Birmingham 15 December 1995.

Second lead: Knowles, left, with Errol Flynn in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, 1938

Photograph: Ronald Grant Archive

## Patric Knowles

A moustache can make a difference. Without it, Patric Knowles was just another of Hollywood's handsome British types, but with his upper lip decorated by a moustache, distinguished rugged and dashing – just like Errol Flynn. They were at Warner Bros at the same time, which was a blessing for Warner's and Flynn, if not Knowles.

After working for his father, a publisher, he made his stage debut at the Oxford Playhouse and his first film, *Irish Hearts*, in 1934. In the half-dozen which followed he was usually cast as an army officer. Warner Bros noted the resemblance to Flynn and signed him up. After romancing Kay Francis in *Give Me Your Heart* (1936), he was Flynn's brother and fellow-officer in *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, both in love with Olivia de Havilland, who actually preferred him to Flynn.

That picture consolidated Flynn's stardom and he made four more in 1937, but Knowles stayed idle till playing de Hav-

illand's fiancé the same year in *It's Love I'm After*, taking a back seat to her and Leslie Howard, as the actor she idolises. When he played Will Scarlett to Flynn's Robin in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) it was clear that Warner's had him pegged as a second lead, but in *Four's a Crowd* (also 1938) he, as a playboy newspaper proprietor, landed de Havilland while Rosalind Russell got Flynn. Flynn and Bette Davis endured a stormy marriage in *The Sisters* (1938 again), but as Knowles was married to one of the lesser siblings, Anita Louise, it was clearly time to move on.

He went to RKO for a spell and then Universal, settling into roles as the other man or the hero's best friend, getting his best break with John Ford's *How Green Was My Valley* (1941), in which he and another English stalwart, John Loder, were two of the Welsh mining brothers (mother, Sarah Allgood, was Irish, and father, Donald Crisp, was Scottish; the cast, mostly British, contained

only one Welshman, Rhys Williams, in a small role).

Knowles moved on to Paramount, decorating two of Michael Leisen's pictures, *Men of the Sea* (1945) and *Kitty* (1946), as Ray Milland's best friend and aristocratic rival for the guttersnipe Paulette Goddard. The first of these was Leisen's remake of his own *Midnight*, with Knowles in a watered-down version of the John Barrymore role. Leisen did it only to escape making a film with Betty Hutton, but relented when Paramount pointed out the importance of maintaining her popularity. Thus he directed her in *Dream Girl* (1948), which gave Knowles another of his best roles, as her publisher and suitor.

Others were in *Monsieur Beaucaire* (1946), as the French milord whom barber Bob Hope impersonates, and *Sam Wood's Jv* (1947), as the doctor arrested for the poisoning committed by Joan Fontaine. But perhaps his finest showing was when cast against type in *The Big*

*Seal* (1949), the cringing bad-die hunted by Robert Mitchum because he has vamoosed with \$20,000 of Jane Greer's dough. With the advent of television the studios no longer kept players of the second rank under contract, but Knowles continued to work, irregularly and sometimes in some not very notable films. To be recalled are *Auntie Mame* (1958), in which he was again a publisher, an old flame of Rosalind Russell, and two westerns directed by Andrew V. McLaglen, *The Way West* (1967), as a Scottish-born general with white Dunbrears, and *Chisum* (1970), as an ally of John Wayne. His last film was *Arnold* (1973), a horror comedy which also featured the one-time child star of *How Green Was My Valley*, Roddy McDowall.

David Shipman

**Reginald Lawrence Knowles** (Patric Knowles), actor: born Horsforth, Yorkshire 11 November 1911; died 23 December 1995.

## Benny Lee

The BBC radio planners were sitting around the boardroom table playing bridge, when one said: "Look, we simply have to find a title for this new programme." Someone said, "How about *Breakfast with Braden*?" and someone else said, "Great, but who do we get to play the lead?" Bernard Braden, recalling the beginnings of Britain's first early morning comedy series, added, "Would you believe, they spent three months looking for a guy called Breakfast?"

*Breakfast with Braden* starred the Canadian couple Bernard Braden and his wife, Barbara Kelly. A minor revolution in British broadcasting, it began in January 1950 and featured two striking supporting players, the dance-band singers Pearl Carr and Benny Lee. Unusually, both were superb radio actors, "Miss Carr", as she was always addressed, playing the dumb bubble-head and Lee, who always addressed the star as "Mr Braden", the ill-educated ignoramus. Their radio personas, created by the scriptwriters Frank Muir and Denis Norden, were totally removed from their musical vocalisations, which were always excellent.

Benny Lee encompassed several careers in his long show-business life, ranging from acrobatics, fairground barker, dance-band drummer, recording artist, television comedian and character actor in films. And there were quite a few more jobs outside showbiz, such as door-to-door salesman and gentleman's tailor. He was born in Glasgow in 1916, and started his singing career as tenor in the school choir. Leaving school at 14, he became a tailor's apprentice, but soon left to join an all-purpose act, which sang, danced and performed acrobatics all around one of the main variety circuits of Britain.

Lee's acrobatic days were somewhat longer-lasting than Braden recalled. "It lasted one evening, largely because of the shape of Benny's nose. In the finale the 12 acrobats grasped each other's ankles and somersaulted around the stage. As the act proceeded Benny noticed that he was following a circle of blood. His blood!" Doubtless the accident did shorten young Lee's career

(and possibly lengthened his nose) for soon he was back in Glasgow, tailoring shirts and in his spare time playing drums for his own semi-professional dance-band. Wishing to return to the stage full time he joined the Glasgow Citizens Theatre, where he received a good grounding in straight acting. This led to his first BBC radio audition in 1938.

In 1941 Lee was heard singing by Johnnie Claes, a trumpeter who had recently formed a swinging dance-band called the Claeptones. He liked the sound of Lee's voice and signed him on as a vocalist. Soon Lee was singing and recording with many bands of the day, including that of Sid Phillips. He was frequently heard on the radio, and not only as a band singer. He played the part of Eddie Cantor in a radio version of the film *Show Business* (1944). His other radio series included *Top Ten* (1944) and *Music from the Movies* (1946).

Lee's voice became popular enough for him to be starred as a solo singer and not just a band singer. In 1948 he was supported by the close-harmony group the Keynotes on "Rambling Rose". Next year he duetted with Joy Nichols, the star of *Take It From Here*, singing "On the 5.45". The Decca company came in with a contract and from 1950 he recorded such hits of the time as "Enjoy Yourself, It's Later Than You Think" and "Down at the Ferry Boat Inn" with the Stargazers. Every type of pop song seemed to suit Lee, and he covered Guy Mitchell's no. 1, "Pretty Little Black-Eyed Susan", and the Hank Williams hill-billy hit, "Your Cheatin' Heart". He enjoyed comedy numbers and sang "Close the Door" with a chorus of young children on a special series made for Christmas 1955 entitled *Benny Lee's Children's Party*.

Television brought Lee a succession of successes beginning when he was cast as the host of the BBC's first ever series for teenagers. Cautiously subtitled "A fortnightly magazine for under 21s", *Teledub* on its first outing introduced the pop star Teddy Johnson and radio's famous "Man in Black", Valentine Dyal. This was in 1953, the same year that Lee played Mr



Lee: several careers

Photograph: Hulton Deutsch

Pegg the myopic tailor to Terry Thomas in the fifth series of *How Do You View*. His short-shouldered measuring of the elegant "Master Terry" was a highlight.

The following year Lee was cast as Arthur Honeybee in an early situation comedy, *Friends and Neighbours*. Peter Butterworth played George Bird, and with their small-screen wives, Avril Angers and Janet Brown, they recorded the programme's signature song. It became a hit, not for them oddly enough but for Billy Cotton and his band. Lee was later one of the supporting comedy cast in the Michael Bentine's crazy series *It's a Square World* (1960) with Clive Dunn, not yet Corporal Jones of Dad's Army. Dick Emery, not yet a solo star, and Bruce Lacey, the madcap inventor.

Lee played character roles in a good many films, from *Night of the Prowler* to Mickey

Spillane's *Girl Hunters*, while continuing on radio as host of *It's Time For Old Time*. He celebrated his 2,000th broadcast in 1953, and then stopped counting. His stage appearances included the musical *Two Gentlemen from Verona* (1973) and *Windy City* (1983).

Bernard Braden regarded Lee with great affection, mainly for the esteem in which he held elder showbiz personalities. When Braden pronounced a typical insult gag by announcing, "Music in Miniature will be introduced next week by Wee George Wood", Lee tried to get him to cut the gag as he knew Wood was sensitive about his size. Braden refused, but never forgot Lee's kindness.

Denis Gifford

**Benny Lee**, actor and singer: born Glasgow 11 August 1916; married (two daughters); died 9 December 1995.

## Births, Marriages &amp; Deaths

## DEATHS

**NEELLY** Hugh, dearly loved husband, father and grandfather, peacefully at home on 26 December. Cremation at Bedford at 1.45pm on 13 January. Family flowers only, any charitable donations via funeral directors, 01525 406132.

**Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS** (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephoned to 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at 25p a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements (notices, funerals, marriages, marriages) must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000.

## Changing of the Guard

**TODAY:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. The Battalion Scots Guards mounts the Queen's Guard at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Irish Guards. **TOMORROW:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am. The Household Cavalry Grenadier Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, hand provided by the Irish Guards.

## Forthcoming marriages

**Dr A. J. Padkin** and Miss A. J. Wood

The engagement is announced between Andrew, son of Mrs Joan Padkin and of the late Mr James Ferguson Padkin, of Sale, Cheshire, and Alison, youngest daughter of Mrs John and Bridget Wood, of Dornington, Hereford.

## Birthdays

**TODAY:** Mr Arnold Allen, former chairman, UK Atomic Energy Authority, 71; Mr Gordon Banks, footballer, 58; Mr David Bedford, athletic, 46; Professor Sir Roy Calne, surgeon and immunologist, 65; Mr Anthony Chipp, QC, 82; Mr Gerald Davies, Controller, BBC Wales, 52; Mr Bo Diddley, singer, composer and guitarist, 67; General Sir David Fraser, former UK representative to Nato, 75; Sir Archibald Hamilton MP, 54; Lord Hareington, former Deputy Speaker, House of Commons, 88; Sir John Houghton, former chief executive, Meteorological Office, 64; Lord Howick of Glendale, a former managing director, Baring Bros, 58; Dame Rosalinde Hurley, microbiologist, 66; Mr Mark Kaplan, violinist, 42; The Right Rev Peter Nott, Bishop of Norwich, 62; Mrs Gwenodwen Randall, Head, Framlingham College, 45; Sir Albert Robinson, former High Commissioner in the UK for Rhodesia and Nyasaland, 80; Mr Nick Skelton, show jumper, 38; Lord Tillingham, former member of the Stock Exchange, 81; Miss Tracey Ullman, actress and comedienne, 36; Mr David G. Wadsworth, Chief Editor, *The Independent*, 51; Sir David Willocks, former director, Royal College of Music, 70; Mr Clifford Williams, former associate director, Royal Shakespeare Company, 69.

## Anniversaries

**TODAY:** Births: Joseph Rudyard Kipling, author and poet, 1865; Simon Guggenheim, senator and philanthropist, 1867; Stephen Butler Leacock, humorous author and economist, 1869; Leslie Poles Horne, novelist, 1895; Sir Carol Reed, film director, 1906; Basil Robert Boyle, chemist, 1911; Alfred North Whitehead, mathematician, 1917; Maurice Deaton Welch, novelist and actor, 1948. On this day: Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* had its first performance, Plington 1879; King Michael of Romania abdicated, 1947; France transferred sovereignty to Vietnam, 1949; Kowloon became Archbishop of Krakow, Poland, 1963. Today is the Feast Day of St Ansgar, St Anisius, St Egin and St Sabina of Spoleto.

**TOMORROW:** Births: Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, 1720; Henri-Emile Benoit, mosaic painter, 1869; Julia Styne (Julius Kervin Stein), songwriter and composer, 1905. Deaths: John Wycliffe, Protestant reformer, 1384; John Flamsteed, first Astronomer Royal, 1719; Gustave Courbet, painter, 1877; Sir Malcolm Campbell, speedster on land and water, 1948; Canon Lewis John Collins, peace campaigner, 1982; Rick Nelson, pop singer, killed 1985; Sam Spiegel, film producer, 1985. On this day: a window tax was imposed in England, 1695; Thomas Alva Edison demonstrated his lamp, 1879; prohibition came into force in Canada, 1917; the chimneys of Big Ben were first broadcast, 1923; the first successful short-wave radio programme was received in Britain from KDKA Pittsburgh, 1923; the British army abandoned the use of the lance, except for ceremonial use, 1973; fire-matching became compulsory in Britain, 1940; the Home Guard was disbanded, 1945; the farthing ceased to be legal currency, 1960; the Central African Federation (Rhodesia and Nyasaland) was dissolved, 1963. Tomorrow is Hogmanay in Scotland and the First Day of St Columba of Iona, St John-Francis Regis, St Melania the Younger and St Silvester I, pope.

## Lectures

**Tate Gallery:** Laurence Bradbury, "Art as Nostalgia: assemblies of memories", 1pm.

## TODAY

**Tate Gallery:** Laurence Bradbury, "Art as Nostalgia: assemblies of memories", 1pm.

## TOMORROW

**Tate Gallery:** Laurence Bradbury, "Top Ten Tate Favourites", 2.30pm.

## The story so much wiser than we are

Oh help! Bishop David Jenkins doesn't like Nativity plays, and is afraid they make Christianity look like a fairy story, and a Vicar doesn't like Father Christmas. Actually, there aren't any fairies in Nativity plays, merely small children dressed as angels or shepherds or wise men and a room full of parents moved to tears. (Sometimes tears of laughter. I remember a Mary with a cold, thoughtfully wiping her nose with her hand before drying her finger on her dress. It brought the house down.) So is a Nativity play a travesty of Christianity? I can't see that. I suppose because I think what matters most about Christmas is the story, and any thoughtful and well-meaning re-enactment of it is good enough for me. Whether Jesus was born in December or June, in 0 AD or 4 AD; whether there were, historically, any wise men or shepherds or a horrific massacre of babies, whether there was, astronomically, an unusual star. I find less interesting than the quality of the story, and the extraordinary power it has had, over the centuries, to capture and influence the human imagination. Painters depicted the scene innumerable times, often setting the scene of the birth in local places and in contemporary costume, as if they knew perfectly well that it was not history that was the point, but something nearer to home.

So what was the point? The point of all stories, I suppose, is to help us to understand pattern in our lives, the pattern that adds up to meaning. This is the reason that, in one form or another – fairy stories, novels, television serials, soap operas – we all lap these stories up so avidly.

The best stories hold us spellbound not so much because of the ingenuity of the

## Meanings of Christmas

**Monica Furlong, closing our series of Christmas reflections, suggests that the point of all stories – including that of the Nativity – is to help us to understand pattern in our lives.**

plot, as because plot itself suggests an underlying purpose in the ebb and flow of events. There are small stories describing, often very enjoyably, lesser happenings in the human drama – flirtation, say, or machinations over a will – and there are bigger stories which take us more deeply into life, which tackle love, or family conflict, or sacrifice, or war. But there are bigger ones still, which ask, and try to answer, the most profound questions of our existence; regardless of the characters involved – they don't have to be saints or in the Bible – these are religious stories. The greatness of Christianity and its story lies in the profundity of the questions it wrestles with, questions of good and evil, of ultimate suffering, of death and life, and above all, of whether there is a God who knows or cares about any of it. It is illuminated by two great stories, both of them focused on the historical figure of Jesus, and within these stories and around them there are any number of subplots, one of

the stories, that of Easter, explores hatred, cruelty, suffering of a very extreme kind, and the life that springs out of death. The story does not explain our tormented condition, but it recognises it fully and finds purpose and dignity within it – the dignity and purpose of God.

The other story, that of Christmas, is as fundamental as that of Easter, and in a sense precedes it in meaning. Before God can hang upon the same cross upon which humanity hangs, he (who is also she) must be found, born within the human condition, in the stable of our loss and confusion and failure.

Jesus is born, as was each of us, in a woman's pain and distress. The story, so much wiser than we are, says that – even when we feel lost and abandoned – God is here, with us and within us. Medieval people without the kind of intellectual sophistication that finds a Nativity play silly, or that horrible kind of modern quibbling that thinks it matters whether Jesus was born four years later, knew in a direct way that this event was cause for tremendous rejoicing, was the sort of insight that changes lives.

We too are at liberty to use the Christmas story by discovering that the meaning, the purpose, the love, the hope, the joy, is right here in the middle of our lives. Where we are most happy, or most troubled, most successful or most foolish, most proud of ourselves, or most ashamed, most secure or most anxious, most cheerful or most depressed, the divinity is already present. Like the shepherds or the wise men, we have simply to recognise that we are touched by the marvellous event. It is as unlikely as winning the lottery, but a great deal more interesting.



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# unit trusts/data

Foreign Exchange Rates				DOLLAR			D-MARK	
STERLING	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month
U.S.	152.26	12-10	34-31	1000	1-1		06567	
Canada	2375	16-11	34-10	13639	1-1	1-8	08629	
Germany	2623.2	16-11	40-10	1000	22-23	25-26	06567	
France	65.95	65-95	153-14	48065	25-25	65-65	31668	
Italy	2262.0	71-62	223-18	10564	1-1	105-105	16140	
Japan	161.42	161-42	400-38	1000	27-28	27-28	271092	
ECU	112.93	16-7	31-28	12307	2-4		025456	
Belgium	45.69C	16-7	31-28	29-30	21-47	160-50	235917	
Denmark	161.42	16-7	31-28	1000	49-53		06567	
Netherlands	24.888	62-54	156-169	16031	30-30	84-70	10000	
Ireland	0.9397	16-7	31-28	1000	25-26	25-26	06567	
Switzerland	158.91	158-91	368-288	63281	35-10	100-80	41412	
Spain	166.25	44-23	125-161	9152	27-26	106-117	847221	
Sweden	18.85	18-82	50-47	179-18	64-69		06567	
Australia	178.85	178-85	115-107	11507	7-36	105-101	102040	
Australia*	2067.2	9-21	43-63	43343	9-21	54-59	09392	
Hong Kong	120.05	120-05	175-18	77527	10-10	100-100	10000	
New Zealand	27.97	27-97	57-12	12576	30-32	84-80	17228	
Saudi Arabia	158.28	158-28	100-100	1000	100-100	100-100	10000	
New Zealand*	2391	0-0	0-0	14145	4-7	103-88	02663	

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1320.2	1389.9	Costa Rica	0.0000	0.0000
Brazil	52.531	1077.08	France	0.5990	0.3631
Canada	1.5295	0.9772	Germany	53.0000	34.7595
Chile	23.195	117.03	Italy	1.0170	0.6393
Egypt	1.2963	3.4000	Japan	29.9196	19.5926
India	1.1707	1.3435	Kenya	0.0000	0.0000
Indonesia	2032.21	1163.00	Malawi	777.253	4686.00
Greece	367.649	4.4950	South Africa	5.1623	3.4445
Italy	1.0170	0.6393	Tanzania	42.3778	27.2800
Kenya	0.0000	0.0000	UAE	5.7034	3.6739

Argentina is quoted as the number of pesos per dollar.  
 Brazil is quoted as the number of cruzeiros per dollar.  
 Canada is quoted as the number of Canadian dollars per dollar.  
 Chile is quoted as the number of pesos per dollar.  
 Costa Rica is quoted as the number of colones per dollar.  
 France is quoted as the number of francs per dollar.  
 Germany is quoted as the number of marks per dollar.  
 India is quoted as the number of rupees per dollar.  
 Indonesia is quoted as the number of rupiahs per dollar.  
 Italy is quoted as the number of lire per dollar.  
 Japan is quoted as the number of yen per dollar.  
 Kenya is quoted as the number of shillings per dollar.  
 Malawi is quoted as the number of kwachas per dollar.  
 South Africa is quoted as the number of rand per dollar.  
 Tanzania is quoted as the number of shillings per dollar.  
 U.A.E. is quoted as the number of dirhams per dollar.

### Tourist Rates

E Bayz	E Bayz	E Bayz	
Australia(Dollars)	3,090.00	New Zealand(Pounds)	2,380.00
Austria(Guilts)	15,060.00	Norway(Kr.)	8,570.00
Belgium(Francs)	44,200.00	Portugal(Escudos)	236,000.00
Canada(Dollars)	2,080.00	Spain(Pesetas)	182,200.00
Cyprus(Pounds)	66,680.00	Sweden(Foror)	10,860.00
Denmark(Kroner)	8,380.00	Switzerland(Francs)	17,750.00
Holland(Guilders)	2,480.00	Turkey(Liras)	102,000.00
Ireland(Pounds)	6,680.00	United States(Dollars)	15,950.00

## Interest Rates

UK	Germany	US	Japan
Base	Discount	Prime	Discount
France	Lombard	Discount	Belgium
Intervention	Canada	Fed Funds	Discount
Italy	Discount	Spain	Credit
Discount	(Discount)	10-Day Repo	Switzerland
Netherlands	Denmark	Sweden	Discount
Advances	Discount	Repo (Ave)	Lombard
			Advances

6.50%	3.00%	8.75%	0.50%
5.00%	5.00%	5.25%	3.00%
4.00%	7.75%	5.44%	3.75%
6.25%	7.75%	9.25%	1.50%
4.25%	4.25%	8.91%	4.125%

### Bond Yields

Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	9%	8.81	8 3/4%	7 1/2	Netherlands	9%	4.80	6 1/4%	6.03
US	5 1/4%	5.25	5 1/4%	5.61	Spain	12 1/2%	9.25	10 1/2%	9.72

	O'Night	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	2	5 1/2	8	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2
Starting Cde	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2
Local Authority Dope	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2
Discount Market Dope	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-	-	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2	6 1/2
Dollar Cds	-	-	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2
ECU Linked Dep	-	-	5 1/2	5 1/2	5 1/2	5

Liffe Financial Futures						
Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	Est/Cons traded	Open interest	
Long Gilt	(Mar '95)	120.27	120.30	70.24	3240	62230
German Bund	(Mar '95)	99.94	99.80	99.94	2638	11990
3M Euro	(Mar '95)	93.48	93.48	93.43	0	0
Italian Bond	(Mar '95)	100.00	100.05	107.92	6307	5087
3M Sterling	(Mar '95)	93.75	93.76	93.75	6388	2777
	(Mar '95)	93.81	93.85	93.85	2717	6050
3M Euro \$	(Mar '95)	94.67			0	0
3M Euro \$	(Mar '95)	95.45	95.45	95.43	4822	88290
3M Euro \$	(Jun '95)	95.45	95.45	95.54	17363	10000
E.C.U.	(Mar '95)	95.07	95.08	95.05	270	6039
	(Jun '95)	95.16			0	8424
Euro 9F	(Mar '95)	96.36	96.36	96.36	910	2237
FTSE 100	(Mar '95)	3700.9	3705.0	3681.0	30796	62596
FTSE 250	(Mar '95)	4040.0			0	3706
Nikkei 225	(Mar '95)	9622.50	9622.50		40337	40337

Liffe FT-SE Index Option				
Settlement price: 3689.0	closing offer price			Call/Put Total/volts
Series	3680	3650	3700	
January	89/11	87/21	11/78	..
February	124/25	88/39	58/60	36-29
March	142/42	110/60	81/81	58/108
April	165/66	124/85	89/107	75/135

## Commodities

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange				LME Stocks	
S/stock	Cash	3 mths	Volume		chg
Alu Hg	848.425		30,655		(87.5)
Alu	1047.80	745.00		59,700	=
Alu Alloy					
Alu Alloy A	2088.50	1864.00	18,641	57,500	(77.5)
Lead	70.70	75.5-76.00	8,822	12,220	=
Lead	70.25-75.00	80.40-84.00	12,766	4,480	62
Lead	70.40	83.00-84.00	1,277	7,950	50
Zinc	100.05-104.00	102.25	22,389	60,700	30.00

Commodity	Contract	Settle	5 m	10 m
Crude Oil	1000	10.00	10.14	10.15

Settle Volume & Change in Volume are based on the first 20 days of trading.

PRECIOUS METALS								
per fix cost	\$	£	Colours	\$	£	\$	£	
Platinum	388.25	357.00	Britannia	405	261	Kruggerand	380.91	345.22
Palladium	1,750	82.30	Britannia 5 oz	203	161	Sovs	86.93	57.80
Silver spot	5.85	3.32	Britannia 25 oz	102	66	Monies	391.405	251.62
Gold Bull	387.05	248.30	Britannia 10 oz	48	31	Maple Leaf	391.405	252.61

Source: KPMG & Co.

AGRICULTURAL										
Cocoa		Coffee		Barley		Potatoes		Potatoes		
LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF	LCF
Use	889	Jan	2008	Jan	16.60	Mar	27540	Apr	266	
Vol	889	Jan	1710	Jan	16.60	Mar	27540	Apr	266	
Use	820	May	2531	May	16.40	May	27700	Jun	384	
Vol	820	May	2531	May	16.40	May	27700	Jun	384	
Use	820	May	2531	May	16.40	May	27700	Jun	384	
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Vol	820	May	2531	May	16.40	May	27700	Jun	384	
Use	820	May	2531	May	16.40	May	27700	Jun	384	
Vol	820	May	25							

Other Soils (Agricultural)				Source		Cost	
Dec	Maize (No.3)**	Shonne	\$13	Soya Oil	5-100kg	\$40	
Jan/Feb	Copra (1)	Shonne	\$20	Jan/Feb	Cocunut Oil (1)	5-Tonne	720
Mar	Cotton (PV)	USCans/b	\$1.15	Jan	Sunflower Oil	5-Tonne	620
Feb	Wool	Acme/kg	690	Feb	Rapeseed Oil	FL 5-Tonne	200
Jan	Rubber	Moore/kg	3680	Jan/Feb	Groundnut Oil	5-Tonne	\$630

ENERGY											
Energy: Short-Term: only, origin: Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, *N Europe, export: F: information, N: data											
Import	Crude	Gas	Gasoline	WTI	Products	Europe					
(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)	(\$/bbl)					
15.30pm	Feb	Yr ago	Feb	Yr ago	6pm	Specs OF North West Europe					
Feb	18.32	-0.07	16.45	Feb	17.875	+1.50	Feb	61.05	Supplies Gasoline	177 175	
Mar	17.79	-0.06	16.43	Mar	17.375	+1.00	Mar	60.95	Naphtia	166 161	
Apr	17.35	-0.06	16.46	Apr	16.725	+1.50	Apr	16.90	EC Gasol	154 165	
Vol	11,047	Index	18.38	Vol	8,204	Vol	4530	Vol	16,316	Vol	182 176

*Price 5:30pm previous day. Year ago prices shown against left margin. Source: USDA National Outlook Report. (Farm prices)							
<b>COMMODITY INDICES</b>							
<b>AGSCI indices</b>	<b>Base date</b>	<b>%Chng</b>	<b>%Chng</b>	<b>Dec 31</b>	<b>%Yr-to-dg</b>	<b>Year ago</b>	<b>% Yr chg</b>
Grain	1970=100	20.84	-2.37	26.76	-1.62	179.93	-12.25
Agricultural	1973=100	27.95	-1.65	34.90	-1.29	218.27	-10.29
Energy	1963=100	70.30	-4.88	58.91	-1.56	58.18	-2.64
Industrial Metals	1977=100	163.68	-0.60	177.82	-1.12	276.82	-1.87
Nonmetals	1965=100	85.34	-0.55	87.68	-1.16	197.04	-2.26
Product Metals	1977=100	498.24	-0.35	474.88	-1.07	747.01	-1.51

Source: Standard & Poor's. \*S&P is a trademark and service mark of Goldman, Sachs & Co. \*\*Data as of 12/31/95. †As of 12/31/96.

## 100 Largest Insurance Funds

Rank	Fund	Assets \$Bil.	YTD % Chg.	Assets \$Bil.	YTD % Chg.	Assets \$Bil.	YTD % Chg.
1	BlackRock Life Managed \$A	7240	1362	7240	1362	7240	1362
2	Affinity Bond Managed	377	177	377	177	377	177
3	Affinity Life Managed \$A	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
4	Affinity Bond Managed	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
5	Affinity Life Managed \$A	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
6	Affinity Bond Managed	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
7	Affinity Life Managed \$A	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
8	Affinity Bond Managed	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
9	Affinity Life Managed \$A	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362
10	Affinity Bond Managed	3678	1362	3678	1362	3678	1362

[illegible]

Comptroller Assistant	4310	4534	Realty Manager 51	4197	4638
Comptroller Assistant	4311	4535	Realty Manager 52	4198	4639
Corporate Manager 54	4312	4536	Realty Manager 53	4199	4640
Corporate Manager 55	4313	4537	Realty Manager 54	4200	4641
CQ Prime Manager	4314	4538	Realty Manager 55	4201	4642
Credit Entry Manager	4315	4539	Realty Manager 56	4202	4643
Credit Entry Manager	4316	4540	Realty Manager 57	4203	4644
Credit Manager	4317	4541	Realty Manager 58	4204	4645
Credit Manager	4318	4542	Realty Manager 59	4205	4646
Credit Manager	4319	4543	Realty Manager 60	4206	4647
Credit Manager	4320	4544	Realty Manager 61	4207	4648
Credit Manager	4321	4545	Realty Manager 62	4208	4649
Credit Manager	4322	4546	Realty Manager 63	4209	4650
Credit Manager	4323	4547	Realty Manager 64	4210	4651
Credit Manager	4324	4548	Realty Manager 65	4211	4652
Credit Manager	4325	4549	Realty Manager 66	4212	4653
Credit Manager	4326	4550	Realty Manager 67	4213	4654
Credit Manager	4327	4551	Realty Manager 68	4214	4655
Credit Manager	4328	4552	Realty Manager 69	4215	4656
Credit Manager	4329	4553	Realty Manager 70	4216	4657
Credit Manager	4330	4554	Realty Manager 71	4217	4658
Credit Manager	4331	4555	Realty Manager 72	4218	4659
Credit Manager	4332	4556	Realty Manager 73	4219	4660
Credit Manager	4333	4557	Realty Manager 74	4220	4661
Credit Manager	4334	4558	Realty Manager 75	4221	4662
Credit Manager	4335	4559	Realty Manager 76	4222	4663
Credit Manager	4336	4560	Realty Manager 77	4223	4664
Credit Manager	4337	4561	Realty Manager 78	4224	4665
Credit Manager	4338	4562	Realty Manager 79	4225	4666
Credit Manager	4339	4563	Realty Manager 80	4226	4667
Credit Manager	4340	4564	Realty Manager 81	4227	4668
Credit Manager	4341	4565	Realty Manager 82	4228	4669
Credit Manager	4342	4566	Realty Manager 83	4229	4670
Credit Manager	4343	4567	Realty Manager 84	4230	4671
Credit Manager	4344	4568	Realty Manager 85	4231	4672
Credit Manager	4345	4569	Realty Manager 86	4232	4673
Credit Manager	4346	4570	Realty Manager 87	4233	4674
Credit Manager	4347	4571	Realty Manager 88	4234	4675
Credit Manager	4348	4572	Realty Manager 89	4235	4676
Credit Manager	4349	4573	Realty Manager 90	4236	4677
Credit Manager	4350	4574	Realty Manager 91	4237	4678
Credit Manager	4351	4575	Realty Manager 92	4238	4679
Credit Manager	4352	4576	Realty Manager 93	4239	4680
Credit Manager	4353	4577	Realty Manager 94	4240	4681
Credit Manager	4354	4578	Realty Manager 95	4241	4682
Credit Manager	4355	4579	Realty Manager 96	4242	4683
Credit Manager	4356	4580	Realty Manager 97	4243	4684
Credit Manager	4357	4581	Realty Manager 98	4244	4685
Credit Manager	4358	4582	Realty Manager 99	4245	4686
Credit Manager	4359	4583	Realty Manager 100	4246	4687
Credit Manager	4360	4584	Realty Manager 101	4247	4688
Credit Manager	4361	4585	Realty Manager 102	4248	4689
Credit Manager	4362	4586	Realty Manager 103	4249	4690
Credit Manager	4363	4587	Realty Manager 104	4250	4691
Credit Manager	4364	4588	Realty Manager 105	4251	4692
Credit Manager	4365	4589	Realty Manager 106	4252	4693
Credit Manager	4366	4590	Realty Manager 107	4253	4694
Credit Manager	4367	4591	Realty Manager 108	4254	4695
Credit Manager	4368	4592	Realty Manager 109	4255	4696
Credit Manager	4369	4593	Realty Manager 110	4256	4697
Credit Manager	4370	4594	Realty Manager 111	4257	4698
Credit Manager	4371	4595	Realty Manager 112	4258	4699
Credit Manager	4372	4596	Realty Manager 113	4259	4700
Credit Manager	4373	4597	Realty Manager 114	4260	4701
Credit Manager	4374	4598	Realty Manager 115	4261	4702
Credit Manager	4375	4599	Realty Manager 116	4262	4703
Credit Manager	4376	4600	Realty Manager 117	4263	4704
Credit Manager	4377	4601	Realty Manager 118	4264	4705
Credit Manager	4378	4602	Realty Manager 119	4265	4706
Credit Manager	4379	4603	Realty Manager 120	4266	4707
Credit Manager	4380	4604	Realty Manager 121	4267	4708
Credit Manager	4381	4605	Realty Manager 122	4268	4709
Credit Manager	4382	4606	Realty Manager 123	4269	4710
Credit Manager	4383	4607	Realty Manager 124	4270	4711
Credit Manager	4384	4608	Realty Manager 125	4271	4712
Credit Manager	4385	4609	Realty Manager 126	4272	4713
Credit Manager	4386	4610	Realty Manager 127	4273	4714
Credit Manager	4387	4611	Realty Manager 128	4274	4715
Credit Manager	4388	4612	Realty Manager 129	4275	4716
Credit Manager	4389	4613	Realty Manager 130	4276	4717
Credit Manager	4390	4614	Realty Manager 131	4277	4718
Credit Manager	4391	4615	Realty Manager 132	4278	4719
Credit Manager	4392	4616	Realty Manager 133	4279	4720
Credit Manager	4393	4617	Realty Manager 134	4280	4721
Credit Manager	4394	4618	Realty Manager 135	4281	4722
Credit Manager	4395	4619	Realty Manager 136	4282	4723
Credit Manager	4396	4620	Realty Manager 137	4283	4724
Credit Manager	4397	4621	Realty Manager 138	4284	4725
Credit Manager	4398	4622	Realty Manager 139	4285	4726
Credit Manager	4399	4623	Realty Manager 140	4286	4727
Credit Manager	4400	4624	Realty Manager 141	4287	4728
Credit Manager	4401	4625	Realty Manager 142	4288	4729
Credit Manager	4402	4626	Realty Manager 143	4289	4730
Credit Manager	4403	4627	Realty Manager 144	4290	4731
Credit Manager	4404	4628	Realty Manager 145	4291	4732
Credit Manager	4405	4629	Realty Manager 146	4292	4733
Credit Manager	4406	4630	Realty Manager 147	4293	4734
Credit Manager	4407	4631	Realty Manager 148	4294	4735
Credit Manager	4408	4632	Realty Manager 149	4295	4736
Credit Manager	4409	4633	Realty Manager 150	4296	4737
Credit Manager	4410	4634	Realty Manager 151	4297	4738
Credit Manager	4411	4635	Realty Manager 152	4298	4739
Credit Manager	4412	4636	Realty Manager 153	4299	4740
Credit Manager	4413	4637	Realty Manager 154	4300	4741
Credit Manager	4414	4638	Realty Manager 155	4301	4742
Credit Manager	4415	4639	Realty Manager 156	4302	4743
Credit Manager	4416	4640	Realty Manager 157	4303	4744
Credit Manager	4417	4641	Realty Manager 158	4304	4745
Credit Manager	4418	4642	Realty Manager 159	4305	4746
Credit Manager	4419	4643	Realty Manager 160	4306	4747
Credit Manager	4420	4644	Realty Manager 161	4307	4748
Credit Manager	4421	4645	Realty Manager 162	4308	4749
Credit Manager	4422	4646	Realty Manager 163	4309	4750
Credit Manager	4423	4647	Realty Manager 164	4310	4751
Credit Manager	4424	4648	Realty Manager 165	4311	4752
Credit Manager	4425	4649	Realty Manager 166	4312	4753
Credit Manager	4426	4650	Realty Manager 167	4313	4754
Credit Manager	4427	4651	Realty Manager 168	4314	4755
Credit Manager	4428	4652	Realty Manager 169	4315	4756
Credit Manager	4429	4653	Realty Manager 170	4316	4757
Credit Manager	4430	4654	Realty Manager 171	4317	4758
Credit Manager	4431	4655	Realty Manager 172	4318	4759
Credit Manager	4432	4656	Realty Manager 173	4319	4760
Credit Manager	4433	4657	Realty Manager 174	4320	4761
Credit Manager	4434	4658	Realty Manager 175	4321	4762
Credit Manager	4435	4659	Realty Manager 176	4322	4763
Credit Manager	4436	4660	Realty Manager 177	4323	4764
Credit Manager	4437	4661	Realty Manager 178	4324	4765
Credit Manager	4438	4662	Realty Manager 179	4325	4766
Credit Manager	4439	4663	Realty Manager 180	4326	4767
Credit Manager	4440	4664	Realty Manager 181	4327	4768
Credit Manager	4441	4665	Realty Manager 182	4328	4769
Credit Manager	4442	4666	Realty Manager 183	4329	4770
Credit Manager	4443	4667	Realty Manager 184	4330	4771
Credit Manager	4444	4668	Realty Manager 185	4331	4772
Credit Manager	4445	4669	Realty Manager 186	4332	4773
Credit Manager	4446	4670	Realty Manager 187	4333	4774
Credit Manager	4447	4671	Realty Manager 188	4334	4775
Credit Manager	4448	4672	Realty Manager 189	4335	4776
Credit Manager	4449	4673	Realty Manager 190	4336	4777
Credit Manager	4450	4674	Realty Manager 191	4337	4778
Credit Manager	4451	4675	Realty Manager 192	4338	4779
Credit Manager	4452	4676	Realty Manager 193	4339	4780
Credit Manager	4453	4677	Realty Manager 194	4340	4781
Credit Manager	4454	4678	Realty Manager 195	4341	4782
Credit Manager	4455	4679	Realty Manager 196	4342	4783
Credit Manager	4456	4680	Realty Manager 197	4343	4784
Credit Manager	4457	4681	Realty Manager 198	4344	4785
Credit Manager	4458	4682	Realty Manager 199	4345	4786
Credit Manager	4459	4683	Realty Manager 200	4346	4787
Credit Manager	4460	4684	Realty Manager 201	4347	4788
Credit Manager	4461	4685	Realty Manager 202	4348	4789
Credit Manager	4462	4686	Realty Manager 203	4349	4790
Credit Manager	4463	4687	Realty Manager 204	4350	4791
Credit Manager	4464	4688	Realty Manager 205	4351	4792
Credit Manager	4465	4689	Realty Manager 206	4352	4793
Credit Manager	4466	4690	Realty Manager 207	4353	4794
Credit Manager	4467	4691	Realty Manager 208	4354	4795
Credit Manager	4468	4692	Realty Manager 209	4355	4796
Credit Manager	4469	4693	Realty Manager 210	4356	4797
Credit Manager	4470	4694	Realty Manager 211	4357	4798
Credit Manager	4471	4695	Realty Manager 212	4358	4799
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Credit Manager	4473	4697	Realty Manager 214	4360	4801
Credit Manager	4474	4698	Realty Manager 215	4361	4802
Credit Manager	4475	4699	Realty Manager 216	4362	4803
Credit Manager	4476	4700	Realty Manager 217	4363	4804
Credit Manager	4477	4701	Realty Manager 218	4364	4805
Credit Manager	4478	4702	Realty Manager 219	4365	4806
Credit Manager	4479	4703	Realty Manager 220	4366	4807
Credit Manager	4480	4704	Realty Manager 221	4367	4808
Credit Manager	4481	4705	Realty Manager 222	4368	4809
Credit Manager	4482	4706	Realty Manager 223	4369	4810
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Credit Manager	4484	4708	Realty Manager 225	4371	4812
Credit Manager	4485	4709	Realty Manager 226	4372	4813
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Credit Manager	4487	4711	Realty Manager 228	4374	4815
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Credit Manager	4489	4713	Realty Manager 230	4376	4817
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Credit Manager	4493	4717	Realty Manager 234	4380	4821
Credit Manager	4494	4718	Realty Manager 235	4381	4822
Credit Manager	4495	4719	Realty Manager 236	4382	4823
Credit Manager	4496	4720	Realty Manager 237	4383	4824
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Credit Manager	4498	4722	Realty Manager 239	4385	4826
Credit Manager	4499	4723	Realty Manager 240	4386	4827
Credit Manager	4500	4724	Realty Manager 241	4387	4828
Credit Manager	4501	4725	Realty Manager 242	4388	4829
Credit Manager	4502	4726	Realty Manager 243	4389	4830
Credit Manager	4503	4727	Realty Manager 244	4390	4831
Credit Manager	4504	4728	Realty Manager 245	4391	4832
Credit Manager	4505	4729	Realty Manager 246	4392	4833
Credit Manager	4506	4730	Realty Manager 247	4393	4834
Credit Manager	4507	4731	Realty Manager 248	4394	4835
Credit Manager	4508	4732	Realty Manager 249	4395	4836
Credit Manager	4509	4733	Realty Manager 250	4396	4837
Credit Manager	4510	4734	Realty Manager 251	4397	4838
Credit Manager	4511	4735	Realty Manager 252	4398	4839
Credit Manager	4512	4736	Realty Manager 253	4399	4840
Credit Manager	4513	4737	Realty Manager 254	4400	4841
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Credit Manager	4515	4739	Realty Manager 256	4402	4843
Credit Manager	4516	4740	Realty Manager 257	4403	4844
Credit Manager	4517	4741	Realty Manager 258	4404	4845
Credit Manager	4518	4742	Realty Manager 259	4405	4846
Credit Manager	4519	4743	Realty Manager 260	4406	4847
Credit Manager	4520	4744			

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Legg & Gen Managed Fz	5432	5811	United Priority Kungap	1570	2337
Burly Manager	5435	5728	Westway Manager	25.25	296.21
Barry Sales Security A	5438	6072	Wilder Greatm Montana S3	3653	4246
John Hs Angles	5439	1775	Winston Investor Linc	3052	3512
John Hs Managed S	5478	5343	Winco Fin Hs Managed	3052	3512
John Hs Managed S	5481	2880	Winco Fin Hs Managed	7752	7797
John Hs Managed S	5482	4834	Woodbury Lte Fund Asset	14828	15974
John Hs Managed S	5483				

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# business

INDEPENDENT • Saturday 30 December 1995

BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2530 fax 0171-293 2098

Advertising rivalry: Maurice is cleared to pitch head-to-head for his previous company's clients

## Saatchi set for full-scale war

MATHEW HORSMAN  
Media Editor

Maurice Saatchi, Britain's best-known advertising man, will next week declare full-blown war on his old firm, Cordiant, launching an aggressive campaign to lure away clients and staff.

The move will follow the expiration on New Year's Eve of a legal agreement signed last June between M&C Saatchi and Cordiant, the new name of Saatchi & Saatchi, under which Maurice and Charles Saatchi agreed to avoid all contact with clients and staff of their former company.

"It is pleasing to be able to start the new year with the ability to compete directly with all our competitors," Mr Saatchi said from his country home yesterday.

Added a senior M&C Saatchi insider: "There are lots of old contacts that will now be revived. There is a long list of desirable clients we would like to have."

Cordiant's top clients include Dupont, General Mills, Hewlett-Packard and Toyota. Asked whether M&C Saatchi, the rival firm established by the Saatchi brothers one year ago, intended to move aggressively to poach new clients, Mr Saatchi responded: "You can rely on that."

Cordiant, the holding company that operates Saatchi & Saatchi, the UK agency which is headed by Jennifer Laing, as well as other agencies worldwide, said: "We began 1996 in the best position to gain new business than for many years."

Cordiant lost several high-profile clients earlier this year, following the acrimonious departure of the Saatchi brothers from the company they co-founded. The brothers lured away Mirror Group, Silk Cut, Dixons and British Airways, among other clients, when they set up a rival firm on 11 January.

The defections pushed Cordiant into near-panic. Last summer, Cordiant and M&C Saatchi agreed to drop all

### Saatchi accused over missing files

Maurice issues writ for breach of contract

### Saatchi issues writs against Maurice and other defectors

Tories may be poised to ditch Saatchi

Saatchi versus Saatchi: How the brothers hit the headlines when controversy erupted at the beginning of the year

legal actions and to maintain a ceasefire until the end of 1995. Since then, Cordiant has managed to win new business and to retain several high-profile clients, including high-spenders Procter & Gamble and Toyota.

In the Spring, Saatchi & Saatchi UK, the London-based agency, recruited a new chairwoman, Jennifer Laing, and

announced it would henceforth be "business as usual." In the autumn, the holding company announced the appointment of Bob Seelert, a US consumer products executive, to oversee the company's recovery.

The client losses have led to lower revenues and a restructuring programme aimed at cutting costs and staffing levels. Cordiant employs 10,500 peo-

ple worldwide, of which 4,000 work for Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide, the international network of which the London-based agency is a part.

Media analysts point out that the two adversaries remain mismatched. Since M&C Saatchi was set up, it has won business worth about £300m in billings a year, of which about £120m is UK-based. The company does

not reveal revenues. Cordiant, for its part, had revenues of £775m last year, and billings of nearly £4bn. M&C Saatchi is heavily weighted toward the UK, with 140 staff in London, another 40 in New York, Hong Kong, Singapore and Sydney.

But M&C Saatchi insiders said yesterday the company could handle global accounts with ease, relying in part on its link to Publicis, the international agency. "Publicis is like a distribution system for us," said one senior executive. "We don't need to spend money on an expensive international network. We have shown we can handle BA's global account, for example, working on campaigns in 60 countries."

M&C Saatchi intends to push for more business from its existing clients in 1996, having won international work for Quantas (worth about £40m a year), BA, and Glaxo Wellcome. "We had a great 1995," Mr Saatchi said, "and I expect 1996 to be just as good or better."

## Granada tipped to raise stakes in Forte battle

MATHEW HORSMAN

Granada is expected to raise its £3.2bn bid for Forte within the next 10 days, but only by a relatively modest amount of £200-£300m, sources close to the company said. The higher bid could come as early as January, six days after Forte's final defence document is published.

A final decision on the sweetener will be made next week, and will depend on how Granada's shares perform in the interim. The initial offer is for four Granada shares plus £23.25 for every 15 Forte shares. Granada shares closed last night at 645p.

While lower than the £600m sweetener called for by some City analysts, the increased bid will be seen as a sign that the television and leisure company is not yet prepared to abandon its hostile takeover.

Granada declined to comment on its intentions. But an insider said: "Our resolve is cast-iron. Our intention is to buy the whole of Forte." Indications of a higher bid came as the two companies traded criticisms over tactics and strategy in the increasingly bitter struggle. Forte again lashed out at what it calls Granada's "stalling growth and conglomerate-driven" strategy. It also unveiled higher profit forecasts for the year ending 31 January 1996, saying pre-tax profits would be not less than £190m, compared to forecasts of £185m published in the initial defence document on 4 December.

er occupancy rates in London, along with a stronger performance at its provincial hotels, were behind the better-than-expected profit.

Granada dismissed the new figures, saying that they remained 7 per cent lower than five years ago, and represented only a 7.4 per cent return on net assets.

"This only underlines what we've been saying all along," Gerry Robinson, Granada's chief executive, said. "Forte is failing to achieve a decent return on its assets and is not delivering real value for its shareholders."

Granada is expected to remain on the sidelines until Forte unveils its final defence document on Tuesday. That document is expected to include a revaluation of Forte's hotels operations, as well as details on how the company intends to reward shareholders following the proposed £1bn sale of the restaurant business to Whitbread.

It is believed the document will also reveal plans to distribute Forte's 68 per cent stake in the Savoy Group of hotels directly to Forte shareholders.

Following publication of the defence document, Granada is expected to step up efforts to convince shareholders to accept its bid, principally through meetings with institutional investors and analysts.

It promises to provide further details of how it can enhance Forte's profitability by £100m a year, following the acquisition.



Maurice Saatchi

Advertising accounts gained since January 1995*			
M&C Saatchi		Saatchi & Saatchi	
Account	Annual billings	Account	Annual billings
Mirror Group	£20m	Carlsberg Tetter	£4m
Silk Cut	£8.5m	Sketchleys	£1m
Dixons	£40m	Procter & Gamble	£25m
BA	(UK only) £30m	Comet	£24m
PPP	£5m	Playboy	£1.5m
Sekonda	£1m	MS Society	£0.6m
Courage Best	£2.5m	Dr Peppers	£8m
Scottish Equitable	£3.5m	Norwich Union Direct	£10m
Qantas	(UK only) £3m		
Head	£2.5m		
Alamo	£1.5m		
Pfizer	£1.3m		
Glaxo Wellcome	(Corporate) £2.5m		

Source: Campaign



Jennifer Laing

## Levene is front runner for Weinstock job

RUSSELL HOTTEN  
and JOHN WILCOCK

Sir Peter Levene, outgoing chief executive of the Canary Wharf development, has emerged as the front runner to succeed Lord Weinstock at GEC.

The defence electronics giant has said it expects to make a decision in the spring in readiness for Lord Weinstock to stand down as managing director in the summer.

Sir Peter, a former head of defence procurement, is one of several executives to have had talks with Lord Pryor, the GEC chairman who heads a sub-committee set up to choose a successor.

GEC shares rose this week on speculation that a replacement had been found. Sir Peter's imminent departure from Canary Wharf was being seen as ideal timing for an announcement early in the New Year.

He surprised the City this week when he said that he is to leave Canary Wharf shortly, following its takeover by a syndicate of international investors led by Paul Reichmann. Sir Peter said that he had been asked by Mr Reichmann to stay on but had decided that his job at Canary Wharf was done.

Sir Peter said on Thursday that he has yet to make up his mind about his future. He will definitely continue to act as an efficiency adviser to the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. As a Sheriff of the City of London he is also a possible candidate for Lord Mayor of London in several years' time. He refused to comment on any other possible job offers he may have received. Sources who know Sir Peter are not surprised however at the speculation surrounding the GEC job.

George Simpson, chief executive of Lucas Industries, was last year tipped as Lord Weinstock's first choice. But Mr Simpson was seen to have ruled himself out when he told Lucas's annual meeting in November that he intended to stay at least until his contract expired in March 1997.

Bob Quanta, chief executive of BBA, and Sir David Lees, chairman of GKN, have also been linked with the job, though the latter executive is highly unlikely to join.

The only serious internal candidate is Peter Gershon, the successful head of GEC-Marconi. However, the City wants GEC to bring in new blood from outside the group to replace Lord Weinstock, who has ruled GEC with a iron grip for 25 years.

GEC's earnings barely changed since 1990, and some key investors want an outside manager to unlock shareholder value through demergers or break-ups, and better use of the company's £2.5m cash pile.

However, Lord Weinstock, who may stay on as non-executive chairman when Lord Pryor goes, is unlikely to appoint a radical who may undo the work he has achieved over the decades.

This is why one analyst said yesterday that Sir Peter would be a good choice. "He has got the business background, and also experience in the corridors of power at the Ministry of Defence. But he is not radical."

Observers of Sir Peter's two year stint at Canary Wharf, during which the Docklands development has been turned from being a half empty white elephant to an 80 per cent let success story, see his main strength as sales and marketing.

## Court order against ex-Barings bosses

TERRY SLAVIN  
Singapore  
JOHN WILCOCK  
London

Six former Barings directors could face arrest if they fail to comply with a court order granted yesterday to Price Waterhouse, the bank's liquidators, who want to interview the executives in a Singapore court.

The liquidators want to quiz Peter Norris, formerly chief executive of Barings Futures Singapore, as well as James Bax, Simon Jones, Michael Killian, Trevor Johnson and Fu Ya Yin.

The liquidators want to learn more about the circumstances surrounding the collapse of Barings in February following the discovery of over £800m in trading losses run up by rogue derivatives trader Nick Leeson. Barings was subsequently bought by Dutch bank ING, and now trades as ING Barings.

Deborah Ong, a Price Waterhouse partner, said: "We've received a court order to pursue this, and we're in the process of serving the order on

the directors." After interviewing the former directors Price Waterhouse will decide if there are any assets that have not been disclosed and whether to bring a legal action for breach of fiduciary duties.

The authorities can issue an arrest warrant if the directors

fail to appear in court, but a legal source in Singapore said yesterday that the liquidators did not have the power to extradite Mr Norris. The latter is currently in the UK and has vehemently denied the conclusions of the Singapore investigators.

The Singapore-based source

added: "If the directors don't turn up, the rules provide that a warrant of arrest can be issued. That's stated in the winding up rules. How far it would go we don't know."

Mr Bax, the former managing director of Barings Asia Pacific, and Mr Jones, BFS's

former finance director, have been unable to leave Singapore as their passports were seized by the authorities. Two other former BFS directors named in the court orders are also overseas: An American, Laughlin Killian, who is working for ING Barings in the US, and Trevor

Johnson, who is thought to be in the UK.

A court order was also issued against Stephen Pollard, Nick Leeson's UK lawyer, when he was in Singapore for Mr Leeson's trial earlier this year, and a date of 8 January has been set.

Price Waterhouse took steps earlier this month to restrain Mr Leeson and his wife Lisa from profiting from potential book and film earnings. Mr Pollard will face similar questioning in relation to the Leeson's conduct. It is not known whether Mr Pollard will return to Singapore for the court hearing.

Singapore's Commercial Affairs Division, which deals with serious fraud and prosecuted Mr Leeson, is ready to receive evidence of criminal actions if any are uncovered by Price Waterhouse.

Mr Leeson's Singapore lawyer, John Koh, visited him in the Tanah Merah prison yesterday to find out if he intends to appeal his six and a half year sentence. The deadline to file an appeal is 1pm local time in Singapore today.

## Guinness tries a drop of real ale

CLIFFORD GERMAN

Guinness, one of the world's biggest brewers and best known for its stout, is launching a new cask-conditioned ale, called Harwood's Porter - the first such ale to be produced in the 60-year history of the Park Royal Brewery in West London.

According to *What's Brewing*, the newspaper for the Campaign for real ale pressure group, Harwood's Porter will be 5.2 per cent alcohol and will go on sale in March.

The beer will be sold as a Tapster's Choice guest ale by Carlsberg-Tetley, the joint brewing group owned by Allied Domecq and Carlsberg of Denmark.

The new brew is named after Ralph Harwood, a publican in the Shoreditch area of London, who invented it in 1722 and saw it catch on with porters in the local markets, hence the name.

Traditional Guinness still accounts for most of the output of Park Royal, but it also brews Harp Lager, Enigma premium lager, alcohol-free Kaliber and Guinness bitter in a can.

Roger Protz, the head of the real ale campaigners, has endorsed the new product and predicts that unlike many test launches it will suit the course and Guinness will market it nationwide.

Guinness killed off its bottle-conditioned Original Stout four years ago just as taste was

turning in favour of dark beers like Beamish, brewed in Cork, and Murphy's, which is produced by Whitbread, and is unlikely to make the same mistake again, Mr Protz claims.

Whitbread meanwhile is test-marketing Hurley's Irish-style keg beer in 25 of its pubs. It will be brewed at the Castle Eden brewery in Durham, and is intended to compete with the highly successful Caffrey's ale launched this year by Bass, and with Killeney, which Guinness brews in Ireland. Greene King is testing Wexford Irish Ale which will be brewed at Bury St Edmunds.

The new ales will help offset a gradual decline in low-volume niche brands available to the consumer.

Losses include specialist ales from local brewers and experimental ales which fail to pass marketing tests. Bass for example is discontinuing a number of premium brands including Bass Distinction and the Black Dove bottled ale, which failed to find sufficient acceptance.

Whitbread is to discontinue seven beers aimed at the take-home trade including Newquay Steam Bitter, Whitbread Light Ale in cans, Whitbread Pale Ale in large cans and bottles, and Mackeson's Stout in returnable pint bottles.

On the plus side the latest Good Beer Guide lists 347 micro-breweries including 57 new ones in the previous 12 months alone.

## Paribas chairman under investigation

NIGEL COPE

The chairman of Paribas, the French bank, was yesterday placed under formal judicial investigation following inquiries into allegedly false accounting at a Paribas subsidiary.

André Levy-Lang has been told to appear in Judge Eva Joly's offices in the next few weeks. Paribas shares fell Fr5.5 to Fr268.5 on the news.

The inquiry relates to an investigation in 1991 into Ciments Francais, the French cement company, which was then a Paribas subsidiary. Judicial sources claim Mr Levy-Lang was an accomplice to the presentation of inaccurate accounts at the company. The inquiry centres on certain off-balance sheet operations. Paribas denies that its chairman was aware of these operations which enabled Ciments Francais to record a 1991 profit instead of a loss until October 1992.

Paribas sold the subsidiary to Italian group Italcementi for Fr6.6bn in May 1992. After a due diligence process the Italian group discovered some off-balance sheet items and claimed Fr500m back from Paribas. Paribas took the loss in its accounts and filed for a civil suit in damages. The French court has always maintained it did not know about the off-balance sheet operations.

Paribas said neither its chairman nor anybody else at the bank had any knowledge of the disputed financial transactions until the audit in October 1992, five months after it had sold the company. Under French law, being placed under formal investigation does not mean that the person has been charged. However, Judge Eva Joly is reported to be keen to establish to what extent Mr Levy-Lang knew about the operations.

Mr Levy-Lang had a meeting with the Ciments Francais finance director in February 1992 to discuss the subsidiary's high debts. He then asked for a breakdown of the debts, but said the reply did not include the off-balance sheet items. Paribas says it established the group's 1991 accounts "with sincerity".

Ciments Francais chairman Pierre Conso was jailed in August on suspicions of insider trading. Paribas said it was unaware of the operations as Mr Conso had hidden them from the company's auditors.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change %	1995 High	1995 Low
FTSE 100	3623.30	+12.60	+0.3	3998.30	2954.20
FTSE 250	4021.30	+13.80	+0.3	4021.30	2967.30
FTSE 350	1320.60	+6.20	+0.3	1320.60	1432.40
FT Small Cap	1541.55	+2.73	+0.1	1993.11	1678.61
FT All Share	1802.55	+5.90	+0.3	1837.78	1469.23
Dow Jones	5107.32	+11.57	+0.2	5207.44	3632.08
Nikkei	18998.15	-4.98	-0.0	20011.75	14445.41
Hong Kong	10073.39	+75.22	+0.7	10073.39	6997.93
Frankfurt	2292.88	-21.96	-1.0	2317.01	1910.95

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Short-term	UK medium	US long	Short-term	UK medium	US long
1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term (%)	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Term (%)
UK	6.44	5.31	7.22	6.71	7.57
US	5.75	5.38	5.81	7.54	5.99
Japan	0.50	0.63	2.90	2.59	2.81
Germany	3.81	3.63	6.03	7.80	6.85

CURRENCIES					
£/\$	£/DM	£/Y	£/\$	£/DM	£/Y
1.5526	0.361	1.5645	0.6441	0.15	0.839
1.5540	0.3630	1.5665	0.6435	0.23	0.839
2.2222	0.0147	2.425	1.3313	0.084	1.55
160.163	0.0147	156.09	103.195	0.055	99.71
83.1	0.3	88.5	94.0	0.3	98.1

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Latest	12 Mo	Index	Latest	12 Mo
On Brent	18.33	+0.05	15.49	149.6	+3.105
Gold \$	387.05	+0.1	382.75	106.5	2.105
Gold £	249.30	+0.65	244.565	Base Rates	-6.50p

In today's Money section

Financial checks: Managing money in 1996, page 16  
 1995 in review: A vintage year for equities, page 19





**'It is hard to disagree with the general opinion that after continuing to rise strongly up to mid-year, share prices will fall back to finish the year roughly unchanged'**

## What the heck, let's try another market forecast

Yes, it has to be admitted. Since about the middle of the year, this column has been consistently wrong about the stock market, having adopted, until quite recently at least, a bearish stance on shares. As it is, the market has finished the year on a high note, with the FT-SE 100 closing at a record high of 3,689.3, a gain of more than a fifth since its low point last January.

What does the new year hold? Given our record, we should perhaps be leaving the prediction game well alone this time round, but what the heck, here goes anyway. It would be nice to take a contrary view on prospects for the London stock market. Unfortunately, it is hard to disagree with the general opinion that after continuing to rise strongly up to mid-year, share prices will fall back to finish the year roughly unchanged.

In itself, this seems an unremarkable prediction but there could be fireworks within it with the FT-SE 100 index perhaps breaking the 4,000 barrier at some stage in the first six months before falling back strongly, possibly in the form of a substantial single correction.

Interest rate cuts, a continued high level of takeover activity, and further strength in overseas markets should all power the stock market to new heights as the new year gets underway, but then comes trouble. Growth begins to take off once more and an increasingly rocky Government, on the cusp of losing its majority and with the election looming, refuses all advice to choke off growing

inflationary pressures by re-adjusting interest rates upwards. Kenneth Clarke has ignored the Bank of England's advice once before and got it right, but as Eddie George has remarked, he got lucky. Such luck is unlikely to be repeated. Bonds got the heebie-jeebies, dragging equities with them. But all this is some distance in the future.

For the time being, the weather looks set fair for shares. Equities continue to look the best value around for institutions desperate for a place to stash burgeoning quantities of cash. Moreover, London looks cheap by international standards.

### Where to spend the money, money, money

Money, money, everywhere, but where in the world to spend it? The world as a whole is unlikely to be short of cash for equity investment next year. According to Barings, \$330bn flowed into international portfolio investment this year, of which \$145bn has probably been invested in emerging markets (four times as much as in 1989). Both sums are going to run yet further in 1996. In theory, this favourable background ought to mean stronger stock markets worldwide. But investors have a more than usually difficult task in deciding where to put their money.

Off-setting a possible glut of capital and lower interest rates is the prospect that

growth world-wide will slow and corporate earnings may weaken in many countries. Privatisations, including Deutsche Telekom, the biggest of all, will also mop up cash. Hoare Govett reckons that in large markets new issues and privatisations will rise by \$14bn to \$54bn next year.

Continental Europe provides both opportunities and dangers. Italy continues to suffer from the fragility of its politics. In France, all hangs on the durability of the Franke policy. A continuation of the policy could drive up interest rates yet further and accelerate a weakening of the French market. If it fails, the stock market will boom after the initial shock but the effect for foreign investors could be offset by a devaluing franc. For the cautious, Germany is a better bet.

The US, where the market has risen by more than a third in 1995, looks set to rise further as interest rates are further eased. Curiously, the approach of an election is good for equities in the US. But the bond market cycle may be nearing the bottom and corporate earnings growth is easing. Next year the Dow may end higher, but the chances are it will be with a whimper rather than the 1995 bang.

The Japanese equity market has risen by nearly 40 per cent from its low point, a recovery that surely cannot continue at anything like the same rate given the persistent fragility of the economy. It may be that emerging markets in Asia, Latin America,

and some of the former communist countries such as Poland, many of which have been suffering a long hangover after the euphoria of 1993, will be the flavour of 1996.

### Keeping the utilities in check

Tan Byatt's intriguing idea that merged water and electricity companies should maintain separate listings for the core utility operations seems to have moved on a peg or two. In a letter to the *Financial Times*, he goes a stage further to argue that a separate listing should perhaps be maintained in all water companies. This, he suggests, would be the most effective way of ring-fencing the regulated business in the interests of customers from other diversified activities of the group.

On the face of it, the proposal has much to commend it. As Mr Byatt points out, an independent listing would force the utility to keep its activities totally separate from those of the parent, most obviously by requiring that a majority of the directors are independent of the parent and ensuring that decision-making is in the subsidiary's interests, not those of the wider group.

There are fundamental problems with this approach, however. When they were privatised, water companies were encouraged to diversify and behave like other commercial companies. That was part of the deal.

Furthermore, the maintenance of a separate listing would deprive the parent of many of the tax, cost and other benefits of group-wide management as well as in itself being a costly affair. Far from being a bad thing, to have larger, more professionally managed organisations run the utilities might be beneficial. There is no reason the utilities should be kept independent provided adequate regulatory safeguards exist.

### Alternative gongs for unsung heroes

Many deserving cases within the business and City community have failed yet again to get the expected gong. The following alternative New Year's Honours List is offered up by way of consolation. Step forward Sir Cedric Brown, for services to customer relations; Sir Ed Wallace, for providing the Labour Party with hours of fat-cat jibes; Sir Rupert Murdoch for the amazing double of long service to the Tory Party and ground-breaking research in tax-avoidance; Sir Peter Baring (an OBE goes to Nick Leeson), for an outstanding contribution to the campaign for reform of banking supervision; Sir Rupert Pennant-Rea for services to the carpet industry; and finally a life peerage for Sir Gordon Jones, chairman of Yorkshire Water, for services to the transport industry in Yorkshire. His chief executive, Trevor Newton, is awarded the Order of the Bath.

## Stock Exchange trading records are smashed

JOHN WILLCOCK  
Financial Correspondent

Records were smashed on the London Stock Exchange's markets in 1995, with record trading, record market value for UK companies and a trebling of foreign listings over 1994.

The Exchange's annual round-up of the year published yesterday also highlighted the successful launch of AIM – the alternative investment market – which attracted 121 companies in its first six months.

In the domestic equity market, the Exchange said that a

record £646.3bn of UK and Irish shares changed hands in 1995 – up 6.6 per cent on the previous year. Strong trading in the latter part of the year helped 1995 become the seventh consecutive year of increased turnover in domestic equities.

At the beginning of December the Irish exchange split off to form its own, separate market. The FT-SE 100 soared 20.3 per cent over the year to end 1995 at an all-time high of 3,689.3, up 623.8 points.

The London Stock Exchange said the year saw a slowdown to 190 in the number of UK and

Irish companies joining the Official List after 1994's record 256 newcomers. New issues in 1995 included 75 companies moving up from the unlisted securities market which AIM replaced.

A further 22 companies were relistings. National Grid Group, capitalised at £3.5bn, was the largest UK company to join the Official List by value in 1995. Albright & Wilson was the year's biggest money raiser, coming to the market to raise £470.3m.

The value of the 2,084 UK companies on the Official List rose 17.5 per cent to an all-time high of £895.1bn.

The Exchange said that London did particularly well in attracting international companies seeking a listing. Over the year 38 new foreign companies, more than treble 1994's figure, got a listing. Together they raised a total of £3.6bn.

In August, the Exchange changed its rules to allow global depository receipts to be traded for the first time. These are certificates which represent shares in overseas companies. They allow market professionals to invest in shares which are traded on exchanges not easily accessible to foreign investors. This may be because of exchange controls or settlement and ownership restrictions.

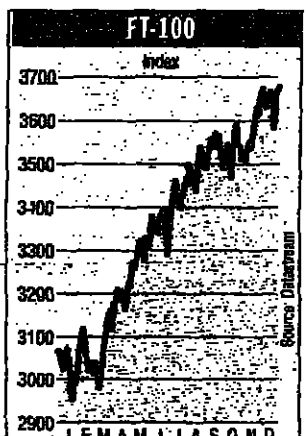
Of the 38 new foreign listings 23 were GDRs, raising £2.8bn. The continuing growth in GDR activity reflected the demand for capital from emerging markets, the Exchange said, and this should prove a big growth area for London.

South Korea was most active with eight new issues, followed by India with four and Taiwan and South Africa with three. Indonesia listed two and Poland, the Czech Republic and the Cayman Islands one each.

Market Report, page 18.

### Highlights of the Stock Exchange year

- A record £646.3bn of UK and Irish shares changed hands in 1995 – the seventh annual rise.
- Record market value for UK companies. The value of the 2,084 companies on the Official List rose 17.5 per cent to £895.1bn.
- AIM attracts 121 companies in its first six months of trading.
- A slowdown to 190 in the number of UK and Irish companies joining the List after 1994's record 256 newcomers.
- London attracts 38 new foreign companies for a full listing, more than treble 1994's figure.
- Gilt turnover set a new record in 1995 with trading reaching £1.57bn, just up on 1994's £1.54bn.



Favoured candidate: Rodney Dennis: takes over temporarily

## Pru starts search for £75bn fund manager

NIC CICUTTI

The hunt began yesterday for a new chief executive to head Prudential Portfolio Managers, one of Britain's largest fund managers looking after more than £75bn of assets, equal to £1.250 for every man, woman and child in the country.

Prudential said it was actively searching for a replacement for Hugh Jenkins, who is formally retiring from the company on New Year's eve.

Until a new chief executive at PPM is found, Mr Jenkins' place at the helm will be taken by Rodney Dennis, currently managing director of the fund management company's UK and European arm.

Mr Dennis, who joined the company in 1987 to head its international equities team, is believed to be one of the favourite internal candidates for the top job although outside applicants will also be interviewed.

However, a Prudential spokesman said no timetable was being set for an appointment. "We will take whatever time is needed to ensure that the right candidate is selected for what is a vitally important job within the group."

Whoever succeeds Mr Jenkins will have one of the most powerful jobs in the country, so important that in a poll 12 months ago of the most important 100 people in the UK, he came in 22nd, several places above Mick Newmark, then the Pru's own chief executive.

The job's importance lies in the fact that it determines the overall investment strategy of the Pru's £75bn under man-

agement, including more than £30bn in the UK fund.

Every day a further £10m is paid into the fund from investors, including millions of endowment and pension plan holders.

Mr Jenkins joined Prudential in 1989 after three years as group investment director at Allied Dunbar, another big insurer. Before briefly working in the United States, he spent 23 years at the National Coal Board's pension fund, where he rose to become director general.

In the past year at the Pru, Mr Jenkins has helped steer its fund management arm into bucking the changes proposed by the Cadbury Committee on corporate governance.

However, he has argued that the newly-formed "Cadbury Two" committee should not go further than monitoring the implementation of changes put forward in the first report.

He has also spoken in favour of "realistic market salaries" for directors, albeit linked with company performance.

Despite his retirement, compulsory for all senior Prudential executives at age 62, Mr Jenkins is expected to remain a non-executive director of Thom EMI, the electronics group, and Rank, the leisure giant.

His temporary successor, Rodney Dennis, is chairman of PPM's asset allocation committee, playing a key role in the overall investment strategy for the funds managed by PPM.

Mr Dennis, who is in his 40s, also chairs PPM's UK equity policy committee, which is responsible for UK investment strategy.

### IN BRIEF

#### Power licence modification plan

Plans to modify the licences of South Western Electricity and Eastern Group were published yesterday by Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator. The changes, which ring-fence the finances of the electricity businesses and provide for extra information to be given to the regulator, have been agreed by Southern Electric International, which has taken over Sweb, and Hanson, which has taken over Eastern.

The takeovers were allowed to proceed without a reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission on condition that new licence terms were agreed with the regulator.

#### Consumers rush for cash

Retailers had a good week judging by cash machine usage. Link, the UK's largest cash machine network, was 40 per cent busier on the first day of the January sales – Thursday – than on the comparable day last year. Jim Nix, general manager of Link, said £23.8m was withdrawn compared with £16.6m a year earlier.

He added: "The marked leap is due to greater consumer confidence or a reluctance to use credit cards when shopping – with cash the purchase is instant with no unpleasant bills to follow."

#### MAM raises £28m for African fund

Mercury Asset Management has raised £27.9m for a new fund investing in Southern Africa, by placing with institutions. The fund will be 80 per cent invested immediately through an asset swap with co-managers South African National Life Assurance. Mercury said the fund would focus on companies which will benefit from growth in the domestic economy and will not reflect the composition of the Johannesburg stock exchange.

#### Shipping line pulls out

State-owned Australian National Line said it is withdrawing from joint management with P&O of a shipping route between Australia, New Zealand and Europe. A spokesman said the European route was a big loss-maker. In November, the government cancelled plans to sell ANL to P&O.

#### Capital Citybus sold

Capital Citybus, a London bus operator based in Dagenham and Tottenham, has been sold to its management in a buyout backed by Lloyds Development Capital. The company operates 24 routes with 201 buses under contract from London Transport. Lloyds has taken a minority stake and the management holds the balance. The deal includes £2m of term debt from NatWest Markets Acquisition Finance and £5m from Lombard Corporate Finance.

#### Oil futures firmer

US spot crudes gained a few cents a barrel, partly due to views that plans to keep British Petroleum's Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, refinery open through January should firm crude demand but hurt product prices. February West Texas Intermediate was at \$19.39-42 a barrel.

#### Boardroom changes

Sir Patrick Sheehy yesterday retired as a director and non-executive chairman of BAT. He is succeeded by Lord Cairns, former head of Warburg. Hugh Feeley and Sir Peter Froggatt retire this weekend from the board of Allied Irish Banks.

#### \$52m Willis Corroon sale

Willis Corroon, the insurance brokers, have sold a US property, Willis Corroon Plaza, for \$52m (£35m). The company, which aims to use the cash from the sale to reduce borrowings and for other corporate purposes said the financial effect of the transaction on the group in 1996 would be broadly neutral.

#### United Utilities debut

The UK's first combined water, electricity and telecommunications utility, United Utilities, will come into being on 1 January, created by North West Water's takeover of regional electricity company Norweb. With sales of over £2.5bn and market capitalisation of over £3bn, it will be one of the 50 biggest UK firms.

#### Tessa table

In the table on the top Tessa accounts in Wednesday's edition the figure for TSB, the best performing bank, was inadvertently transposed. The correct figure should have read £11,904.

## Warrants poised for a revival

Talk of booming equity markets this year has left warrant watchers cold. This neglected area of stock market investment has registered a fall of 15 per cent in 1995, according to Warrants Alert, a Bristol-based group that specialises in warrants.

The news may come as a surprise to many who see warrants as being almost synonymous with options – a highly-leveraged play on the underlying equities to which they are attached. Although there is a connection, the price of warrants is equally likely to be driven by supply and demand. In theory, the price of a warrant, essentially a tradeable option to buy a share at a specified price at some future date, should be easily determinable. Assuming the exercise price is below the share price, the warrant's value should reflect the difference plus an amount to represent the so-called "time value". This equates to the reduction in the carrying cost as a result of having control over the underlying share without having to put up the full share price.

So a warrant to subscribe at 500p when the shares are £20 should trade at over £15. But this year's performance, when shares soared in value and warrants sank, vividly illustrates that the reality can be very different from the theory when demand is lacking. Part of the problem stems from the preponderance of investment trust issues. Another is the importance of the private investor, many of whom are still licking their wounds after having been drawn to warrants by the boom in 1993, when the average price rose 220 per cent. The driver then was the upsurge in interest in emerging market investment trusts. This was fuelled by rises in shares and the attached warrants,

boosted by hopes of new stock market miracles. In Third World economies to rival the Tiger economies of the Pacific Rim. That dream turned sour after the Mexican debt crisis.

However, Andrew McHattie, of Warrants Alert, believes 1996 will see a reversal in the fortunes of the market, which he forecasts will rise 30 per cent next year. He argues that ratings are low in emerging markets like those of the Philippines and Taiwan, while general conditions look similar to those just before the boom in 1993 and 1994. Warrants in Schroder Asia Pacific Fund and in the previously underperforming Morgan Grenfell vehicle, the Overseas Investment Trust, are tipped as ripe to cash in on any rise in 1996.

Meanwhile, after a recent fall, he also likes the look of the BTR 1997 series warrants. While warrants are less volatile than traded options, there are still plenty of risks. Investors are not necessarily protected by buying warrants in safe, solid income stocks, as the Hanson chart illustrates. By contrast, the most money is often to be made in speculative plays like British Biotech, which now has the largest capitalisation warrants in the UK ahead of their expiry in January. The principle of caveat emptor – buyer beware – applies.

### Dana rolls out the barrel

The former Soviet Union has been labelled as the new Wild West for investors as companies compete to take advantage

of the region's vast oil, gas and mineral reserves. Dana Petroleum, which yesterday announced plans to seek a full stock market listing, is one that might attract the bold investor.

Formerly known as Dana Exploration, the company now concentrates on the development and production of oil from fields in western Siberia.

Currently listed on the Exploration Securities Market in Ireland, the move to the main market will raise up to £16m through a placing and open offer.

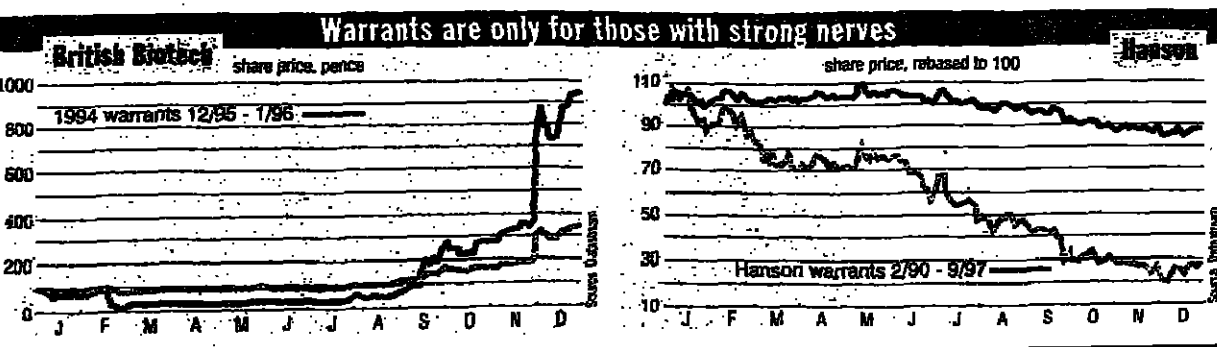
The shares are being priced at 7p which would value the company at around £24m. The last date for applications is 22 January with dealings expected to start a few days later.

The net proceeds of the offer are expected to be almost £10m which the company will use to accelerate its two main projects in Siberia and build relations with its two main Russian partners, Lukoil and Yukos.

Having moved into the Russian market early the company is keen to consolidate its position. It has a 50 per cent stake in the South Yaganskoye field which has proven and probable reserves of 34 million barrels. It also has a 30 per cent share in another field with reserves of 57 million barrels.

Oil sales started in August but shareholders will have to be patient for their returns.

No profits or dividends are expected until 1997 but cash flow should be positive two years later. Dana has come along way since last year when it was taken over by Tom Cross of TM Oil and the shares stood 1p. Even so, the shares are not for the faint-hearted.



**STROUD & SWINDON**  
BUILDINGS SOCIETY  
AND  
**STROUD & SWINDON**  
MORTGAGE COMPANY LIMITED

### NOTICE OF MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE CHANGE

The variable rate of mortgage interest will decrease by 0.25% from 31st December 1995.

This notice is applicable to borrowers whose mortgage payments are updated annually.

The effect of this change will be included in the Annual Update of payments in January 1996.

Head Office: Rowcroft, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3BG. Tel: (01453) 757011



# market report/shares

## Last-minute leap brings the year to a record end

### DATA BANK

FT-SE 100  
3,689.3 + 12.6

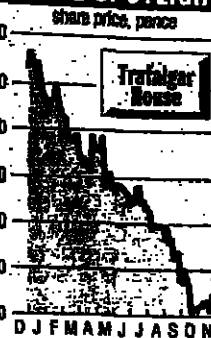
FT-SE 250  
4,021.3 + 13.8

FT-SE 350  
1,830.6 + 6.2

SEAQ VOLUME  
418.8m shares,  
11,494 bargains

Gilts Index  
95.94 -0.02

### SHARE SPOTLIGHT



After much buffing and puffing, shares produced a springlike leap to finish a record-breaking year at a new peak.

It was all a question of will — or, to be more precise, old-fashioned manipulation — which allowed the stock market to celebrate what has been a remarkable 12 months in such style.

Trading, in the half-day session, was pleasantly gentle with a steady trickle of buying orders helping to create a mood of jollity.

Book squaring by market makers and year-end portfolio window dressing by some institutions was again evident. Anticipated New Year share tips were often given a hopeful whiff: so were the perceived takeover and recovery candidates.

The most widely held view is the market will continue to power ahead — at least in the

first half of next year. Takeover action is expected to continue at a heady pace although it is unlikely to reach the record £70bn level achieved this year.

But the looming general election is expected to steadily erode sentiment as the second half of the year unfolds.

One of the influences the market hates is uncertainty. And an approaching election will provide plenty of such a commodity.

Labour has, of course, spent much time and energy in an endeavour to calm traditional City fears about its policy. The signs are that it has failed and a pending change of government will produce the familiar unfavourable market reaction.



### MARKET REPORT

#### DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

The supporting index, covering the 250 stocks immediately outside Footsie, finished at 4,021.3, a year's high but below the peak achieved in February last year.

Vodafone, partly on US bid hopes, was the best performing Footsie constituent, gaining 9p to 330.5p. Royal Bank of Scotland, which is attracting much of the hot takeover money, rose 6p to 586p, a two day 14p gain. It is, however, below the 608p high reached a month ago when takeover talk attained frenzied levels.

Trafalgar House had a quieter session than on Thursday; the shares edging ahead 0.75p to 27.75p. The feeling that 26

per cent shareholder Hong Kong Land, part of the Jardine Matheson empire, is looking at ways to demonstrate its support is behind the strength of the shares.

It is rumoured to have instructed its stockbrokers to lift its stake to 29.9 per cent, the maximum before triggering an obligation to mount a bid for full control. Some, however, think HKL will not bother with such a preliminary exercise but launched a bid at around 35p a share.

Building and related shares moved ahead. Optimism that the housing market should soon emerge from its long depression helped sentiment. But the market has heard it all before. And the gains were muted and selective. Abbey National and Beristford, the Magnet kitchens group, led the field.

The heavy trading, which also featured Redland, BTR, Green Universal Stores and Unilever, represented half the day's volume, ballooning the turnover figure to an unprecedented 418.8 million.

British Aerospace rose 7p to 797p on a Philippines Airbus contract and in a firm drugs sector Glaxo Wellcome gained 10p to 915p on hopes for its influenza treatment and Zeneca 11p to 1,246p as attention was directed at some of the drugs in its research pipeline.

Amstrad managed to recover a little of Thursday's loss, rising 4.5p to 196p. Lloyds TSB gave way to profit taking, off 12p to 331.5p as some snatched their merger rewards.

Stordata Solutions, a computer data group which emerged out of the old Millgate security business, rose 2p to 26p, a new high, on hopes it will soon indulge in rapid expansion.

### TAKING STOCK

□ Alliance Resources, in bitter dispute with its ousted chief executive John O'Brien, seems to be on the recovery road. A cash call is planned and the company has its sights on the former Soviet Union.

There is also talk it is near to clinching a deal, possibly a reverse takeover, that could substantially improve its prospects. The shares edged ahead 0.5p to 3.75p. They hit 12p before sinking to a low of 1p on the O'Brien debacle.

□ London & Associated Properties, at 28.5p, is bumping along near its year's low and well adrift of its estimated 52p asset value. It has lifted its shops portfolio to more than 600 by buying the Kings Square, West

Bromwich, shopping centre. This year's profits are expected to be little changed at £1.7m.

### BANKS, MERCHANT

Share	Price	Change
Bank of Scotland	277.5	+0.5
Barclays Bank	245.0	+0.5
HSBC	210.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### BANKS, RETAIL

Share	Price	Change
Bank of Scotland	277.5	+0.5
Barclays Bank	245.0	+0.5
HSBC	210.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### BREWERIES

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### ENGINEERING VEHICLES

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### ELECTRICITY

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### ELECTRONICS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### FOOD MANUFACTURERS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### GAS DISTRIBUTION

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### HEALTH CARE

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### HOUSEHOLD GOODS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### INDEX-LINKED

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### SHORTS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### UNDATED

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### DISTRIBUTORS

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### BANKS, MERCHANT

Share	Price	Change
Bank of Scotland	277.5	+0.5
Barclays Bank	245.0	+0.5
HSBC	210.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### BANKS, RETAIL

Share	Price	Change
Bank of Scotland	277.5	+0.5
Barclays Bank	245.0	+0.5
HSBC	210.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### BREWERIES

Share	Price	Change
Adnams	125.0	+0.5
Beck's	115.0	+0.5
Carlsberg	105.0	+0.5
Heineken	95.0	+0.5
Kaiser Brewery	85.0	+0.5
London & Associated	28.5	+0.5
Midland Bank	195.0	+0.5
Natwest	180.0	+0.5
Paragon	165.0	+0.5
Royal Bank of Scotland	330.5	+0.5
Santander	155.0	+0.5
TSB	331.5	+0.5
Yorkshire Bank	145.0	+0.5

### DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

2515	90	58 1/2	Wynd Up	
1772				
1882				
2022				
2035				
2643				
2683				
2786				
-				
2768				
2912				

DIVERSIFIED IN				
175	118	Adwest	1 1/2	
353	235	Antipagaste	2 1/2	
348	291	BTR	3 1/2	
270 1/2	144	Bonsford	26	
131	71	Bibby (L)	1 1/2	
51 1/2	40 1/2	Binerary	1 1/2	
948	743	Churton Cons	8 1/2	



## Frank Bruno receives the Robert the Bruce's spider award for admirable persistence in the face of all available evidence

Yesterday, the Queen was inking in the last few names on her New Year's Honours list, wondering, perhaps, about a special mention for Lord Mackay after his work in speeding up the process of divorce. No doubt sporting figures were dotted among the sycophants and time-servers as the gongs were considered, but not in sufficient numbers to reflect the enormous hold sport has over the nation. After all, who is more likely to have lifted our collective heart this year – Jonathan Edwards or some pen-pusher at the Ministry of Agriculture who is guaranteed a knighthood in the small print of his contract of employment?

To redress the imbalance, this column is instituting its own New Year's Honours list for sporting achievement in 1995. But, rather than handing out meaningless strings of initials, the list follows the format of Oscars: awards for specific achieve-

ment in a variety of categories. And, in keeping with the unstoppable tide of commercialisation presently overwhelming our sport, many of the titles have been sponsored.

First off, then, the Kenneth Moore Memorial award for a performance full of the understated virtues of Englishness, yet capable of putting a spring into the most sluggish of steps goes to Michael Atherton for his astonishing innings in Johannesburg. Unfortunately, since he is otherwise engaged in Port Elizabeth once more holding together the England team, he cannot be with us today.

But then, nor can any of the other award winners, such as Frank Bruno, who can console himself in just missing out on Atherton's prize as he picks up the Robert the Bruce's spider award for admirable persistence in the face of all available evidence.

Another boxer, Naseem Hamed, is also honoured. He receives the Ray Illingworth award for continuous display of an ego the size of a diseased bladder. Also, thanks to his leopard-skin fringed thong, Hamed picks up the Manchester United merchandise department award for silliest new item of sporting kit.

The Teflon title for being unable to keep a grip on anything worthwhile is shared in a three-way split between David Seaman, for his performance against Real Zaragoza in the European Cup-Winners' Cup final, and two football club chairmen – Martin George of Leicester and Robert Chase of Norwich – so careless of managers you suspect they would be unable to hold on to a life jacket in a shipwreck.

Despite the excellent claims of Jumbo and Raul Gullit in this category, the Christopher Columbus award for not researching your

Jim White



ON SATURDAY

destination thoroughly enough before setting out on an adventure is won by Ivano Bonetti, the Italian footballer recently signed by Grimsby Town.

Lindford Christie, after his dramatic tumble in the World Championships in Gothenburg, wins the Bird's Eye new-uses-for-a-pack-of-

frozen-peas award. Also easily outstripping the opposition, Tony Underwood takes the John Redwood it-seemed-like-a-good-idea-at-the-time award for winking at Jonah Lomu during the haka before the Rugby World Cup semi-final in an injudicious attempt to put him off his stride. And winning this year's Torvill and Dean golden blade for being world champion in a sport which receives no media attention until a Briton wins is Colin McRae, who is a rally driver.

Meanwhile, the Sid the Sexist award for inability to keep hold of talent is won by Bolton Wanderers, who have lost Bruce Rioch, Jason McAteer and, in all likelihood, their Premiership place in quick succession. Still in Lancashire, the Michael Heseltine award for inventing a grandiose title to describe your meaningless new job goes to Kennedy Dalgligh, self-promoted director

of football at Blackburn Rovers.

The Mary Whitehouse award for keeping a television station's complaints duty officer occupied for an entire fortnight is landed by John Sitton, the former co-manager of Leyton Orient, who narrowly beat off the attendant claims of Jeff Farago. The explosive-fuelled tirades which passed for Sitton's team-talks recorded by the documentary *Orient – Club For A Fiver* would have been rejected as unnecessarily over the top by a Roy Chubby Brown scriptwriters' convention.

Although he didn't win anything at Brisbane Road, Sitton is, in fact, this column's most decorated sporting achiever for 1995. Beating off stiff competition from Will Carling (apropos his 57-faris television programme) and Stan Collymore (for the I'm-unhappy-at-Liverpool interview with *Four Four Two* magazine) he also lands the Norman

Tebbit always-blame-the-journalist award for claiming afterwards that the programme misrepresented him. Plus he shares with Graham Taylor the Walter Mitty imagination shield for believing, after all that, he still has a future in the game.

Finally, everything seems to be going right for Andy Cole. In the week he ended his goal famine, he also scoops the big one: the Bob Monkhouse tired old gag award. The United striker receives it for inspiring the exhumation of the one about them naming one of Manchester's universities in his honour: UMIST. Previously appended to Ted MacDougall, Garry Birtles, Terry Gibson and Alan Brazil, this gag is ritually wheeled out for any Manchester United striker who has difficulty striking his intended target. And thus, as Matthew Simmons will attest, it has never been applied to Eric Cantona.

## Edwards glories in the leap of the faithful

A wondrous year, which was capped by yesterday's award of an MBE, has not turned the head of a down-to-earth new sporting hero, says Geoffrey Beattie

Jonathan Edwards is a remarkable athlete. In the World Championships in Gothenburg in August, he broke the world record for the triple jump not once but twice in successive jumps. And yet he describes his triple-jump accomplishments as "jumping a long way into a sand-pit". He seems to play down his achievements to a bizarre level. This kind of language makes it all sound like child's play, which clearly it is not. Jonathan is also a committed Christian in a world, in his words, "consumed by Satan". So when we met in Newcastle for Radio Five Live, I wanted to find out who this Jonathan Edwards really was, this enigma who seems to find it difficult – psychologically speaking – to take in all his world-class achievements.

The starting point was to ask what he thinks about when he is waiting to jump all that way, into the sand-pit. "I'm not aware of anything in particular that I do at those times," he said. "It's not like Mike Powell, the long jumper; he goes through a visualisation process – for the first six strides, he's like a raging bull, then he's like a gazelle and then finally he's like a leopard. But with me there's nothing like that. I get on the runway, I am 100 per cent into it and then off I go."

This makes it all sound very easy, so does this extreme mental focus just come naturally to him? "I've worked on the whole mental side of things in my weight-training in particular. There's a lot going on in the gym, a lot of outside influences, people chatting away, wanting to take my attention from what I'm doing and I try to focus on that lift and cut everything else off."

"The guy that I work with on my weight-training tells me to just talk with my mouth and not with my head, just forget about what everybody's saying and just get on. That's been ingrained in me – I was good at it anyway, but it's just become slightly more formalised through my training. But it is a quite natural thing."

"I'm very different now from what I was. What's developed over the past two or three years in me is the capacity to be independent. I used to be very worried all the time about what people thought of me. But now I've become much more able to make a decision based on what I feel I should do, regardless of anyone else. I can now go down a line which I believe is right and go for something without worrying what everybody else is thinking. There's a verse in the Bible, in Proverbs, which says that the fear of man is a snare – if you are so worried about



One jump ahead: 'My philosophy is to glorify God in what I do. I've always had strong Christian beliefs', says Jonathan Edwards

Photograph: Allsport

what everybody else is thinking you just end up tying yourself in knots."

Was he very hesitant before making any decisions in the past? "Very much so. I was a bit of a girl's blouse to be honest, a bit woolly as a boy, if I can use that expression. My dad or mum will disagree with me, but I was very diffident. I didn't like to do things on my own. I wouldn't even read a lesson in church in public. I'd

**'I'm very different now. What's developed is the capacity to be independent'**

be so nervous about what people might think.

"I've probably just developed as a person in the past two or three years. I had a wonderful upbringing but it was quite sheltered in many respects. I've developed since I've left home and moved up to Newcastle after university in 1987."

It was then time to reflect on Gothenburg and the World Championships. He had just broken the

world record – did he think that he could do it all again and more in the next jump?

"I've always got a very good idea of how I feel physically and whether or not I'm going to jump well. With the second jump, I knew that I was still focused and physically I was still up for it. So I knew I could still jump well, but with the third jump I knew nothing was going to happen. It's like that in training. I get to the point in a training session, when I'm on the end of a run-up and I know, no matter what I do, it's not going to happen."

1995 was an absolutely remarkable year for him. Was there any indication that it was going to be quite so outstanding? "No, 1994 was a very bad year, following on from a good 1993. I'd trained very hard, but then I got glandular fever. So at the end of 1994, I had a long rest. A lot of people are very sceptical about viruses and think that maybe you're making it all up – you've just had a bad year and you're trying to blame it on something. So I went into my winter training for 1995 in January very low-key, with no great expectations. I was still not totally sure in my own mind that I was 100 per cent physically fit. I wasn't sleeping particularly well. I was obsessed with my pulse – because I know that once my pulse goes below 60 I'm OK. I went to America

in February and things started to turn around a little bit then, mentally, and then I started to train really well – my weights improved, my jumping was good in training. So I thought I was going to have a good season, but not to the level that I did have."

How easy it was for him to suddenly find himself transmogrified into the world champion and the world record holder, the BBC Sports Personality of the Year, an idol to many?

"I think my way of coping with it is that it's still somewhere away in the distance and I'm just getting on with what I normally did. I look at it and I just shake my head and think that's incredible and I'm very thankful for what's happened. But I feel like exactly the same person. I don't feel any different. It's weird, it's still weird. I've never really talked to anybody about this. But take the likes of Lindford Christie – he gives the impression that he was born to greatness and that it's no great surprise that he's doing what he is doing, yet for me it is an enormous surprise. I sometimes wonder if I can do it all again."

Edwards's religious convictions are well known. Did, then, he feel extremely lucky about the events of the past year or blessed in some way?

"I do feel blessed. After I'd jumped in the European Cup, Roger

Black said to his coach: 'I've got to get God', he said. 'It's obviously working. I believe God has blessed me and it's ultimately because of His plan and purpose that I am where I am today and that I've done what I've done. I'm thankful in that respect.'

Did he pray for sporting success? "Yeah, I didn't used to, but I have done. I've asked God to make me successful. I do want to win and I'm honest with that, but at the same time, it's not everything."

Have there been any pitfalls to praying for success? "Oh, there can be. I've no guarantee that prayers are going to be answered. There are certain things that the Bible makes clear if you pray for you can expect answers, but success isn't one of them. But my philosophy of life is to glorify God in what I do. I've always held strong Christian views. When I was six, my mum said that I came to her and said that I'd asked Jesus into my life."

For someone who feels the presence of God so much at work in his everyday life, did he also feel the presence of the devil at work throughout society?

"Very much so. It's stated very clearly in the Bible but I look around and see the type of world that we live in and, yes, I do see it – with all the injustice and poverty in the world. I

also think that there are a lot of temptations from the devil. I think in success there are more temptations, and more subtle temptations, from the devil than in failure. In failure you can say: 'I'm no good, there's nothing in me', and you can throw yourself totally on to God. But with success comes power – people want to listen to my opinions and you can start thinking: 'Oh yeah, actually,

**'I believe God has blessed me and it's because of His plan that I am where I am today'**

I know quite a lot. Vanity is a powerful vice."

One intriguing aspect of Edwards's faith was his decision to abandon his principle of never competing on a Sunday, the day of rest. He missed the 1991 World Championships because of this religious principle, but in 1993 he had suddenly, and quite unexpectedly, changed his mind. Why?

"It's very much a question of

conscience. Through my own Bible study, I came to realise that it wasn't necessary to have this Sabbath when I didn't do any sport. I'm still very much in agreement with the rest principle on Sunday, but it wasn't something that was obligatory for me. So I had no problem with competing on a Sunday, but I started to wonder what people might think of the reversal of my decision. I'd made such a stand over not competing on a Sunday. But this is perhaps where the idea of being independent comes in. I thought that people should make their own decisions, based on what they see of me as a person."

Perhaps this decision to start competing on a Sunday was an important stepping-stone in his own psychological development?

"I think it probably was. For example, my parents were not for the decision and, given the strong influence that they have had over me, it was quite a big thing for me to go ahead and do it regardless."

But how easy was it to live with this dramatic turn-about? How did it feel to compete for money on the Sabbath?

"Well, actually it was the European Cup so it wasn't strictly for money. I didn't actually get paid, so that complicating factor was removed. The funny thing is that on my first jump I had a massive foul. My foot must have been two inches over the board and they gave it to me. So draw your own conclusions."

Was it a religious experience for him to be sailing through the air further than any mortal before? His answer was an emphatic no.

"God is very much part of it, but it's not a religious experience. My feelings out on the track are very similar to most other athletes – a mixture of fear, of excitement, of wanting to do well. I must point out that I've always felt that I was equally blessed when things weren't going well, because these periods have given me the critical perspective so that I don't get carried away with what's happened this year. The down times that I've had, not qualifying for the Olympics in 1992 and the virus in 1994, have been the most incredible times of personal character development, particularly of spiritual growth. I look on these periods as preparing me for the success that I've had now."

Finally, what of Edwards's future in athletics and beyond?

"I think that I could possibly carry on until the Olympics in 2000. But, being an athlete, you've always got to be flexible with your plans – an injury could come along and you could lose form. I feel that I'd like to be involved full-time in Christian work of some description. At the moment, I'm doing a theology degree by distance learning, so that when I do retire as an athlete I will have a qualification which might open doors in other areas."

Geoffrey Beattie is professor of psychology at Manchester University. His series of interviews with leading sports personalities, *Head to Head*, continues with Jonathan Edwards on Radio Five Live tomorrow at 8.05pm.

**NEW FACES FOR '96:** Germany's latest golfing sensation has proved himself over the toughest terrain, says Tim Glover

## Cejka shows he has the head for major heights

Alexander Cejka was refused admission to the Munich Beer Festival (his home city playing host to one of his favourite pastimes) on the grounds that they thought he was a skinhead. Bernhard Langer would not have had that trouble, but in 1996 Cejka should have no problems gaining entry to almost anything.

Perhaps it is his background, but in the course of the European Tour if he had attempted to live the life of a fugitive, he could hardly have changed his appearance more effectively. When Cejka won the Turespaña Open in Andalusia last March, his hair was long enough to accommodate a ponytail; when he won the Hobe Bruce Open in Austria in August, he had the makings of a beard.

Earlier in the season, he had an agreement with his coach, Peter

Karz: they would both go for the Yul Brynner look if he won two tournaments. They had the close shave when they returned to Germany and by the time of the Volvo Masters in October, Cejka just about had enough hair to avoid being mistaken for one of those dummies that remain intact when a Volvo crashes into a wall. In short, he is not so much the face for '96 as the head.

Cejka grew up in Communist Czechoslovakia and was introduced to golf like so many impressionable youngsters, by his father, an engineer and a 16 handicapper at the local course in Mariánské Lázně, a notable spa town. The club was once the Wentworth of its day, but went into decline under the hammer and sickle party, who have never regarded golf as a suitable ideological pursuit.

In 1980, aged nine, Cejka and his father, under the pretence of going on holiday to Yugoslavia, fled to Germany. Two years later, when the German Open came to Frankfurt, Cejka was there. "I remember seeing Bernhard Langer. He walked right by me and I looked up to him as a big star. He's still my hero. It is hard to believe that I now play in the same tournaments and play practice rounds with him."

Cejka, a scratch amateur at 16, gained his card at the fifth attempt, but had been successful on the Challenge Tour, winning the Czech Open twice. He was beginning to make an impression in 1994 with a couple of top 10 finishes, but then suffered a series of setbacks. He was out of action for five weeks with sunstroke; was disqualified from the Mercedes German Masters for missing his tee

time due to a traffic jam on the autobahn and missed the Czech Open because of food poisoning.

The Turespaña Open was where Cejka arrived. He was the only player to avoid straying over par for all four days and won the tournament by three strokes from Costantino Rocca. That was his maiden Tour victory and his second success, in the Austrian Open, was even more spectacular. Cejka opened with a course record of 61, 11 under par, and continued to post record aggregates for two, three and four rounds. He was never headed and finished four strokes clear of the field with 267, 21 under par.

His exploits in Austria coincided with the US PGA Championship in Los Angeles, where most of the leading Europeans were competing. However, for the Volvo Masters, the

end of season showpiece, the cream had settled at Valderrama. Cejka, having never finished in Europe's top 100, was making his debut in the championship. All eyes were on the denouement to the season-long duel between Colin Montgomerie and Sam Torrance, with Langer the only other player capable of winning the Order of Merit.

Big Monty duly won the war by finishing second, but the tournament belonged to Cejka. Valderrama is consistently the leading course in continental Europe and any professional breaking the par of 71 can congratulate themselves. Cejka went round in 74, 66, 72 and 70 for an aggregate of 282, two under par. He finished two strokes ahead of Montgomerie, three ahead of Torrance and four ahead of his hero, Langer. Turning home, Cejka was not

on the leaderboard, but he birdied the 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th and 18th. He finished sixth in the Order of Merit. The previous year he was 102nd. From winning a total of just £258 in 1989, he had earnings in 1995 of £308,000.

One of the reasons for his emergence is that he worked for hours, sometimes until 3am, at an indoor course in Munich. Another is that, according to the official statistics, he is the best putter on the Tour with an average per green of 1.69.

Cejka, who was 25 a couple of weeks before Christmas, appears to have the temperament and resolve to be a cut above. He will now be able to play on the major stage for the first time, and Valderrama beckons for the Ryder Cup there in 1997. Before then, the Munich Beer festival owes him a few rounds.



Cejka: Master of Valderrama











## sport

**FOOTBALL: Things have gone right and then wrong for Rovers in 1995. Glenn Moore looks at Ewood Park's highs and lows**

# Blackburn misplace their fighting spirit

*"If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster, And treat those two impostors just the same..."*

It is not known if any Blackburn players voted when Rudyard Kipling's "If" was chosen as the nation's favourite poem earlier this year, but few people will be as well-placed to appreciate its most commonly quoted sentiment.

In 1995, Rovers experienced the greatest highs and deepest lows (genuine tragedy apart) that the English game has to offer. In May, they won their first championship for 81 years, completing a four-year rise from the Second Division. By November, they were the laughing stock of Europe, a miserable Champions' League campaign reaching its nadir when Graeme Le Saux and David Batty traded punches in Moscow.

They have since won a game in Europe, but a 5-0 defeat by Coventry undermined their decline. They receive Tottenham at Ewood Park today, 17 points and nine places behind the leaders. The most obvious difference between last season and this is in the dug-out. Where Kenny Dalglish once stood, Ray Harford now sits. Under Harford, the team appears to have lost cohesion and commitment. There have even been chants of "Harford out" from the Rovers' supporters. It would be nice to hear

Harford's defence of his record, but having agreed to be interviewed at Blackburn's training ground yesterday, he left the complex before the agreed time. A case can be put in his absence. The signs of decline were there in April. Blackburn tottered over the finishing line like a marathon runner who had been asked to run a mile too far. Only Manchester United's failure to beat West Ham gave them the title.

**Dressing-rooms are conservative places and any form of intellectualism is frowned upon**

Since 4 April, when they gained a slightly fortuitous win at Queen's Park Rangers, Blackburn have won 14 and lost 17 of 37 matches. The away statistics are the most telling: played 20, lost 14, won two – both against Endsleigh League opposition.

Championships – and European competitions – are won away from home, that is where a team shows its character. That there is dissension in the side is

obvious, the Moscow brawl underlined that. But teams do not have to like each other, there were players in the successful Liverpool team of the 1970s who could not stand one another, but possessed a mutual respect and aim and backed each other up on the field.

Jealousies and cliques only become a problem when a team begins losing. Suddenly players do not make that extra effort for a team-mate; they do not make that covering run, or pull defenders out of position.

Within the Blackburn side, there are players whose attitudes could be defined as "new lad" – the ones who spent a sightseeing trip around Moscow telling rude jokes at the back of the bus. Others possess either a broader outlook on life or a more focused, professional one.

The most obvious outsider is Le Saux. Dressing-rooms are conservative places and any form of intellectualism is frowned upon. Le Saux reads the broadsheets, lives in a cottage he is renovating (rather than on a mock-Georgian estate), and writes of being upset by the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Nigerian dissident (hardly a household name in dressing-rooms).

But while Le Saux is not especially close to the likes of Alan Shearer and Tim Flowers, they respect his ability and are disinterested in his life outside the club. These are players who work on their game and are only concerned with Le Saux's contribution to the cause. However, others at Blackburn take a more malign view.

That is not the only divide. Mike Newell's supplanting of Chris Sutton in attack may not be entirely unconnected with his being Shearer's golfing partner. Then again, it may have something to do with Harford being unimpressed by Sutton's approach.

For his part, Sutton is said to be unhappy with Harford's stewardship. There is a feeling among some players that the manager has favourites: Shearer is particularly influential. Since Shearer appears to be carrying the team virtually single-handed, one might say he deserves to be heard. After one defeat this season when Harford suggested the team thank the supporters, Shearer responded along the lines of "never mind that, get us in the dressing-room and sort out what is going wrong".

If Shearer has sometimes regretted not going to Italy during the summer, it has not shown in his play. A few others can be happy with their



The best: Blackburn held on to their lead to win the Premier League title in May

Photograph: Empics

## WHAT THEY SAID ABOUT BLACKBURN

The club has won nothing since I was a boy in short pants. I've dreamed of this moment since I stood on a wooden box on the old terraces. And that really is the nuts and bolts of everything I'm talking about... our players went out there to show the Blackburn Rovers supporters that they're going to be the best.

Jack Walker before the final match of last season

I have always felt there's a scriptwriter up on a cloud somewhere who has been penning Kenny's life story. He just seems to pop up in the most incredible places to create history. Gordon Strachan on Kenny Dalglish

People think that Rovers were a struggling little club before Kenny [Dalglish] took over. But that's extremely unfair. I had taken them to three play-offs in a row and I signed Colin Hendry for £27,000.

Don Mackay, who had guided Rovers to the brink of the Premiership before Kenny Dalglish arrived.

I had a hollow feeling when Blackburn won the championship. It is vulgar slinging £60m at something and buying success that way. John Madejski, chairman of Reading

What has happened here is a fairytale, little short of a miracle. People do not realise how far we have come. They really think we are up there with clubs like Liverpool and Manchester United, just because we won the League. We are not. We are a small-town provincial club and it is going to take three years at the top before we even start comparing ourselves to these clubs.

Ray Harford in the week before Blackburn's visit to Liverpool in September

Morale is very low. It wasn't until 3pm today, because we thought we'd maybe turned a corner. But it's another kick in the teeth and we have to show character now. They are not bad players, the majority of it is confidence.

Ray Harford after the game at Anfield ended in a 3-0 defeat

I'm not saying the dream is over. And I'm not saying they won't win a trophy again this season. But I am absolutely staggered that they haven't made more use of Jack Walker's money, that they didn't strike while the iron was at its hottest.

Kevin Keegan in September

Before the match I told my players they will be playing against 11 guys ready to fight for each other for 90 minutes – not with each other.

Oleg Romantsev, Spartak Moscow coach, after the Le Saux-Batty brawl in their Champions' League match against Blackburn



The worst: Brawling in Moscow was the culmination of a disastrous European campaign

Photograph: Empics

## United use Prunier to help cut the lead

The holly and the rivalry of the Christmas programme have given way to days when minus 30 refers to a temperature rather than Bolton's goal difference. For all that, the festive spirit promises to prevail at Old Trafford today.

After Manchester United's victory in Wednesday's Premiership summit meeting, Kevin Keegan described his Newcastle team as a circus without lions. By tonight, the top of the table could be more like a pantomime as Geordie voices bellow: "Behind you!"

United might have gone into the visit of Queen's Park Rangers 13 points adrift. They could close the gap to four. Newcastle's match at West Ham having fallen foul of the weather.

With four centre-backs indisposed, the United manager, Alex Ferguson, has called up the French international William Prunier. A former

Auxerre and Marseille player, like Eric Cantona, the 28-year-old Prunier has made only one reserve appearance during his trial from Bordeaux, but has the height to combat Mark Hateley as the Queen's Park Rangers striker strives for his first English league goal in 11 and a half years.

Prunier's availability also means that Roy Keane, United's most imposing performer of late, need not revert to defence. QPR shattered United with a 4-1 away win almost four years ago to the day but, unless they exploit the lack of familiarity which may undermine the home back four, hopes of a repeat look like hoop dreams.

Tottenham – who receive Manchester United on New Year's Day – may have emerged as Newcastle's closest challengers by the start of next week. "Resilient" is a word not normally associated with London fancy dans, yet Spurs

**Phil Shaw looks forward to the weekend's football action**

take the Premiership's only unbeaten away record to Blackburn, those northern softies who have still to win on their travels.

Something may have to give today. Only Newcastle, with a 100 per cent record, are stronger at home than the champions. Moreover, Alan Shearer is menacingly poised on 99 Premiership goals for Blackburn, having scored in every match at Ewood Park this season.

Joe Kinnear, whose judgement is under particular scrutiny in the Republic of Ireland, must decide whether to include Vinnie Jones in Wimbledon's line-up at Arsenal. Ominously for the tattooed trundler, the

club refused to exonerate him over his dismissal for pole-axing Rudi Gullit.

With all the hot air emanating from Jones this week, perhaps he could be loaned to one of the clubs unable to beat the freeze. Everton have no such difficulties, though they do have the problem of rehabilitating their own angry young man. Duncan Ferguson's comeback continues on the bench, and Tony Yeboah may also have a watching brief for visiting Leeds if he returns from Ghana's game in Egypt in time.

The sight of Leeds' Tomas Brodin – born and bred inside the Arctic Circle – wearing gloves at Bolton was a measure of how cold it is. Today, Burnley Park stages a meeting of the division's bottom two. It may be premature to talk of six-pointers at the halfway stage of the season, but Bolton risk being cast adrift if they do not beat Coventry, or at least improve on

a haul of three points from nine games.

In the pursuit of Derby at the top of the First Division, second-placed Charlton face Southend (sixth) – with the home forward and best-selling author Garry Nelson primed for his 600th senior outing – while Sunderland (third) collocate with Birmingham (fourth), a fixture never goalless at Roker Park in 44 starts.

Meanwhile, spare a thought for West Bromwich Albion, beaten 11 times in a row and visiting Barnsley, where they last won in 1947/48. The worst post-war run belongs to neighbouring Walsall, with 15 straight defeats, with the all-time record of 18 set by Darwen more than a century ago.

So desperate are Albion at their manager, avowed purist Alan Buckley, tried to sign a certain Wimbledon midfielder on loan this week. His subsequent sending-off, and the suspension to come, scuppered the deal.

## Team news

**Manchester United v QPR** French international centre back Prunier will replace May, who has joined Pottler, Bruce and Parker on the injured list. Manager Ferguson hopes to keep the Bordeaux player for the rest of the season as United attempt to overhaul Newcastle in the title race after their impressive 2-0 win over the leaders.

**Blackburn v Tottenham** Striker Shearer will try for the goal which will enable him to become the first player to score 100 in the Premiership. Blackburn are forced to make at least two changes to the side which defeated Manchester City 2-0 on Boxing Day. Centre back Hendry and midfielder Stanwood are

**Everton v Leeds** Everton retain an unchanged side after their 4-0 beating of Middlesbrough on Boxing Day. Ferguson has recovered from gastric flu and is expected to be one of manager Royle's three substitutes. Leeds manager Wilkinson is leaving 14-goal Yeboah out following his move to Aston Villa. He is expected to take his place while Ford is expected to continue in the absence of the suspended midfielder Palmer, who is completing a two-match ban.

**Chelsea v Liverpool** Striker Hughes is suspended, so Farfong is expected to lead the Chelsea attack. Barnett and Dow have been added to the squad as midfielder Myers faces a late fitness test. The in-form Fowler, scorer of five goals in his last two games, has shaken off the effects of flu to take his place in an unchanged Liverpool side which is determined to step up its title challenge.

**Northern Ireland centre back McDonald** starts a two-match ban after reaching 22 disciplinary points, so Queen's Park Rangers are expected to recall Ready. Striker Allen is fit again and challenges Galloway for a place alongside Hateley in attack.

**Nottm Forest v Middlesbrough** Dutch international Roy is in contention for a recall. He ended his seven-week absence with a team captaincy when he made a brief substitute appearance in the 3-0 win over Sheffield Wednesday on Boxing Day. Lee, scorer of the winner against the Owls, is the player most likely to stand down. Manager Robinson is set to return for injury-hit Middlesbrough. Barry (Achilles tendon) and Higgin (hernia) are among the absentees but their Brazilian import Juninho is included in the squad, despite being injured in the 4-0 Boxing Day defeat by Everton.

## Graham is unrepentant, more bunged against than bunging

Several candidates – former Arsenal players, all – were mooted to replace the disgraced George Graham after his departure from Highbury, but none had sufficient experience or managerial success to make them likely contenders. What was needed was, perhaps, not so much an Arsenal man, as an Arsenal-style man. A fine, upstanding manager, emphasising neat passing, clean living and freshly combed hair with straight partings in equal measure. Stand up, Bruce Rioch.

Not, perhaps, the first choice of the majority, Rioch won the Highbury honours over with ease. It was a high rate, a scandal-free personal life and moderate manner on the field. Gone is the "hoof and hope" game which characterised many a Premiership performance in Graham's last three seasons. Indeed, league form from '92/93 onwards had been poor, performances (and players) jaded and the formation defensive, a sad metaphor of the siege-like mentality of the man then pulling the strings. The purchase of Wright not withstanding, Graham appeared reluctant to buy big, despite a midfield peopled by nobodies. Those desiring excitement and a result would have done better to attend a singles-only karaoke rather than a league game at Highbury, where the noise level seldom rose above the decibels required for a mass whinge.

Bruce possesses a candour that George would have found alarming. His programme

## FAN'S EYE VIEW

**No 130 Arsenal SARAH DOYLE**

ing. It took him a game or few to settle down, but against Villa at Highbury back in October, he and Wright appeared almost clairvoyant, finally becoming a partnership.

A player of rare vision and ability, Bergkamp embodies Rioch's brave new Arsenal, he has skill and a high work rate, a scandal-free personal life and moderate manner on the field.

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Bruce possesses a candour that George would have found alarming. His programme

notes address unflinchingly issues surrounding defeats, team selection and the like. He has acknowledged the need to restore the defence to its traditional mean self and has proved unsentimental in off-loading excess baggage (see ya, Campbell).

Rioch is rebuilding: not always an easy process (witness the dire home bore-draws against Blackburn and Chelsea), but a progressive one, at least.

Although vaguely in touch with the leaders, Arsenal have, realistically, about as much chance of winning the title this season as Martin Keown has of being described as a world-class play-maker. But you've got to fancy us – with our shiny new attacking formation – for a cup, surely.

Meanwhile, as George chews the lid of his Bic and contemplates the correct spelling of curriculum vitae, he remains unrepentant, a defiant and indignant figure, more bunged against than bunging.

Now, Gooners are left with a confused legacy: an undying gratitude to the man who gave us some of the most magnificent moments of our lives, imbued with a bitterness for his betrayal of us and, if we're honest, some relief, too, at his departure. The time had come. George's shelf-life was over – his ideas had dried up and his vision had gone stale.

It's a transitional year. New boss. New blood. But a new pride, too. Yeah. Pride of North London, that's us. Wanna make something of it?











# Weekend

Independent



Audrey Hepburn  
in 'Breakfast at  
Tiffany's'  
Photograph:  
Kobal Collection

## Women who shop too much

page 4

### INSIDE STORIES

**2** There's this woman I pick up every year, completely unconscious from the pub, take her home, carry her to her door, fish around for her keys, take her upstairs, put her to bed and post the keys through the letter-box

**5** The oddest material on which to write a diary must surely be that used by an Italian peasant woman. It was a sheet – not the A4 but the linen bed variety – which she covered with long lines of tiny handwriting and edged with poems in red ink

**3** 'I want to lock up more criminals than any other sheriff or police chief in America. At the moment I'm number six, but I'm determined to make number one'

**11** A man was charged with attempted robbery after allegedly brandishing a leek at an NCP car park official. No money was handed over and a Carmarthen man with a leek in a Tesco bag was later taken into custody

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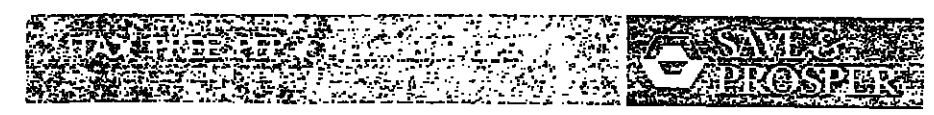
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## picture story



'You feel like an extra-terrestrial,' says Martin Brammer, veteran New Year's Eve cabbie. 'They behave as if you don't exist. The things I've seen. Not just snogging, far more. Sometimes it gets to where you have to intervene, otherwise you'd get arrested. Then when you say something, they look amazed'



'New Year's Eve always involves fancy dress. I remember one year, I was sent to pick up a party dressed as clowns. A mini-cab had been for them, but they had sent it back and had asked for a London cab instead, because they couldn't get their massive feet in anything else'



'And once I had a bloke dressed as a crocodile, with an enormous papier mâché head. We couldn't work out how to fit him in, so in the end I drove him to the pub with his head sticking out the window all the way'



'People act like you're not there, so you hear all sorts. Girls are the worst, their talk about what they're going to get up to, it's far worse than men. Sometimes I think I'll drop them off at the party, park the cab, go in and hope they pick me up and do it to me'



'You always get rows. Usually, no always, it's the feller has been eyeing up someone else and he gets the ear-bashing the moment they're in the cab. I've had couples break off engagements in my cab. Nice way to see in the New Year'

## I HAD THAT NEW YEAR'S EVE IN THE BACK OF MY CAB ONCE



'I had regular New Year's Eve fares, always took them to the same place every time. This couple, lovely folk, went to a party every year in a church hall where there wasn't any furniture. It wasn't a bring-a-bottle party, it was a bring-a-chair party'

As these pictures show, it is an odd, nether world taxi drivers inhabit on New Year's Eve. For the past seven years, Martin Brammer, from Halifax in Yorkshire, has found himself first-stepping into a festive twilight zone. 'Even though you're surrounded by people out and about in a jovial mood,' he says, 'you're very much on your own. And come midnight, you're absolutely alone. You're sat there in your cab and nothing happens. The biggest party of the year's taking place and you just sit there, outside, waiting for it to end. You drop your last fare at about five to 12 and then the old folks who don't really want to stay up at all but just feel they have to, so want to get to bed as soon as possible, start to hire you about 10 past. Then you're working solid until the morning. But for 15 minutes in between, sitting in your cab out on the street, everything stops. The world goes dead. You cease to exist. It's surreal.'

Martin, as a self-employed driver, has always volunteered to drive on New Year's Eve because, frankly, the tips are good. 'When they've had a drink,' he says, 'they don't realise how much they're tipping you. The fare's £9.78, they give you a £20 note and say, 'keep the change'. You say: 'It's a 20 not a tenner'. And they say: 'Yeah? The biggest tip I got on New Year's Eve was £40 from a fellow I picked up outside a casino. He'd just won four and a half grand. Then there's the woman I pick up every year, completely unconscious from the pub, take her home, carry her to her door, fish around for her keys, take her upstairs, put her to bed, post the keys through the letter-box. She's always very generous when we settle up later.'

The big question the New Year's Eve taxi driver asks himself before he picks up a fare, however, is this: are they a piker? 'You can usually tell by the way they hold themselves,' says Martin. 'I suggest a bit of fresh air before we start. Most parties I pick up have someone hanging out the window, but I guess



I've had no more than a dozen actually throwing up inside the cab. I never charge them extra, to be honest. Most people have spent up for the night and wouldn't have another £25. Besides, that's the beauty of a London cab. Plastic floor, plastic seats. I take it to an all-night garage with a jet wash, hose it down, dry it with a towel I keep in the boot for the purpose and I'm back on the road in 25 minutes. This year, though, Martin will have no need to remove the seasonal deposits: he has given up driving and now sells Ferraris. For the first time in years, he will be out among the celebrating hordes, not the one left alone in the cold. 'I booked the cab,' he says. 'Back in September.'

Pictures by Amanda Crowther  
Story by Jim White

## THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

EDITED BY DAVID BENEDICT

READ  
The History of  
England

At just 14 pages, this small, but perfectly formed history of this scepter'd isle as written by Hampshire's liveliest teenager, Jane Austen, is nothing short of a miracle. Who wants Keith Michell dabbling in divorce as Henry VIII or Glenda Jackson's shaven-headed Elizabeth I when you can curl up with this monstrously opinionated and beautifully misspelt classic. It is safe to predict that Andrew Davies will not put Colin Firth (either in or out of his britches) on screen in a lavish BBC dramatisation of this little-known delight, but that should not deter you from purchasing this deliciously partisan analysis of the monarchy from Henry IV to Charles I. How unlike the homelife of our own dear Queen (above).

Published in the new Penguin 60s Classics series at 60p

SEE  
The Duchess  
of Malfi

This time last year, the hottest ticket in town was unquestionably the Cheek by Jowl all-male *As You Like It*, a staggeringly accomplished piece of direction, design and ensemble playing, both genuinely hilarious and extraordinarily moving. This year they're back again, but comedy has given way to Webster's magnificent tragedy, *The Duchess of Malfi*. The title role is played by Anastasia Hille (above), who proved her mettle with a striking Isabella in *Measure for Measure* with the same company. Whatever you do, don't wait for the reviews. The show is on for just four weeks and by the time everyone else wakes up to the fact that this leading British company is here, the tickets will be rarer than hen's teeth. Reports from the world tour are glowing.

The Duchess of Malfi, Wyndham's Theatre, London WC2 (0171-369 1736)

BUY  
The  
Midsummer  
Marriage

Sir Michael Tippett will be 91 on Tuesday ('Happy birthday to you...'), and short of being invited to the party, the best way to join in the celebrations is to buy his first opera, *The Midsummer Marriage*. Music critics have been scandalised by its non-appearance on CD when virtually everything else he has written has been newly recorded by the Chandos label or re-released by record companies fretting in their back catalogues. Happily, Sir Colin Davis's excellent recording is back, in time for you to get acquainted with this astonishingly lyrical work before booking tickets for Graham Vick's breathlessly awaited new production at Covent Garden, which opens on 16 January. If all you've ever heard is the suite of *Ritual Dances*, you're in for a magnificent surprise.

'The Midsummer Marriage' is on the Lyrita label

WATCH  
An ice-  
hockey game

Some sports were made for home entertainment. Who wants to queue for hours at Wimbledon only to get neck-ache from too much head-swivelling when the game is so fantastic on TV? With ice hockey it's another story. The puck zips across the ice so fast you're hard pushed to see it on the screen. No. You have to see it live. Only there can you experience the sheer speed and raw power of the game, not to mention the blood and guts as the well-upholstered players slarn against the slides or hurt themselves into motorway-scale pile-ups, much to the delight of the screaming, family-filled crowds. It's highly Americanised, with cheesy organ music, and though you may be an ice hockey-virgin, can you think of missing the Slough-Jets vs the Basingstoke Bison?

The Ice Arena, Montem Lane, Slough 6.30pm (01703 821555)

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Edinburgh's  
Hogmanay

We may be undergoing a genuine, Bing Crosby-esque white Christmas, but nothing should deter you from heading for Edinburgh, the city that knows how to do New Year properly. It may be more famous for its summer festival and Morningside ladies taking tea in Jenners, but this weekend sees it hosting Europe's biggest New Year celebrations. There were more than half a million people there last year and this year's five-day festival plans to beat that record with a torchlight procession, spectacular open-air concerts, a grand-scale street-theatre extravaganza, a caldron, a champagne ball and fireworks all over the city at midnight. Oh, and tonight Gary Glitter plays the Princes Street Gardens. Be there and be part of his forthcoming TV special.

For information call the Hogmanay 24-hour hotline (0891 88 1996)



# The seven deadly sins (celebrity version)

You ask them what you want to know, they tell you what they want you to know. Rarely does the interview achieve the intimacy of the confessional. But look back through a year of Independent interviews and you'll discover, as David Benedict did, that the devil lies in the detail



## SLOTH

**Peter Ustinov on performing.** For me it's a more cerebral and certainly more lucrative form of jogging.

**Id lang** I hardly ever listen to music.  
**Joanna Lumley** I'm about as ambitious as a dish of water.

**Andy Kershaw on John Peel** How can you not adore somebody whose entry for interests in *Who's Who* reads: 'Staring out of the window'?

**Carrie Fisher** I hate exercise but I love talking.

**Paul McCartney** You do know I don't read music, don't you?

**Hilary Mantel** I have never had guilt pangs about paying a woman to clean my dirty bath.

**Michael Dobbs on getting a job at Saatchi and Saatchi from Tim Bell** I asked him if he could suggest someone who might give me a job for a lot of money and not much work and he said, 'I will'.

## LUST

**Gillian Telford in response to allegations that she had oral sex in a lay-by** What kind of people did they think we were that we would stop on a major slip road for sex? I was still recovering from a Caesarean birth and was coming down with flu. Besides any of that, Geoff was throwing up.

**Sean Penn** Women are the bane of my life but I always fall for them.

**Jenny Eclair on being an all-girls school** Everyone had crushes on the two male teachers, even though they had lichen round their flies.

**Helmut Newton** There are no sexual fantasies in my pictures.

**Helena Bonham Carter on Woody Allen** I was amazed, when I read the script, that I was playing his wife. I thought, 'Well, you've got a fantasy and a half'. But then, on his scale, I'm gettatic and over the hill.

**Anne Diamond on being an unmarried mother** I thought: everyone else in the office is doing it.

**Adrian Edmondson** I think it is most men's dream to live a shag-happy, drinking, guilt-free life.

**Bertrand Tavernier** People say there's a danger that seeing so many films will handicap you. But admiring, having dinner with, speaking to many beautiful girls does not discourage you from making love.

**William Burroughs on being called a dirty old man** I wish I was a dirtier old man. I'm ashamed to go 24 hours without thinking about sex.

## WRATH

**Julie Burchill** If Louisa May Alcott had really been sound, she'd have written a trilogy, and called the last one *Divorced Lesbian Sluts*.

**Justin de Villeneuve on the collapse of a projected film.** If only I'd been allowed to sit down with the bloke, then, well: crash, bang, wallop, two kippers and a bon-bon. how's your father, done and dusted.

**Wallace Shawn on acting in America films** It's a shame, but with a few rare exceptions, American movies are revolting.

**Patsy Kensit on author Nick Hornby writing about her husband** I hope I bump into him again, because if I do, I'm going to headbutt him.

**Alan Plater on being forced to cast Alan Bates in *Oliver's Travels*** It's not a negotiating stance at all. It's like being consulted by Vlad on how you'd like to be impaled.

**Paul O'Grady on being Lily Savage** Lily gets in the way. I play second fiddle to her all the time. I sometimes come into my flat, and there's a leopardskin handbag on the floor, and a pair of her shoes and an old coat - and it's like living with some boozey old barmaid who's trashed the place. I think, 'Slag!' and start muttering about her under me breath.

**Shaun Ryder (formerly of Happy Mondays)** Even from being 10 or 11 I was amazed by the effect the word 'fuck' could have in the middle of a pie shop.

**Michael Parkinson** The only thing I was ever remembered for was being attacked by a fucking emu.

**Robert Altman** The threat of Aids has made people more conservative, more cautious. It's also made masturbation far more popular than it's ever been.

**Will Self** I'll give Tony Blair a "sound bite"! I'll run right across the floor of the House of Commons, side-swipe the Master of Arms, and take a bite out of one of his copious ears; then we'll hear the leader of the Labour Party really sound off. I think that's what it'll take to get an authentic noise out of this postmaster of the glib, this walking autocue in a sensible suit.

**Stephen Fry shortly before abandoning *Cell Mates* owing, allegedly, to bad reviews** It's like opening a piece of used lavatory paper, reading newspapers, just so unpleasant, the smell. I'm sure all sorts of unpleasant things have been said about me in the past year, but the great thing is I don't know about them.

**Ice-T** When they call you articulate, that's another way of saying, 'He talks good for a black guy'.

**Gilbert & George** Gilbert: If we don't like someone we do our double act.  
George: We can clear a dinner table in 10 minutes.

**Gilbert: Less.**

**Sheriff Joe Arpaio** I want to lock up more criminals than any other sheriff or police chief in America. At the moment I'm No 6, but I'm determined to make No 1.

**Donna McPhail** I hate Winona Ryder with all my heart.

**Camille Paglia on young American actresses** They're all little wheeks, indistinguishable from each other. They all have this winsome quality they mistake for acting.

**Victoria Wood** If theatre isn't life-enhancing, what's the point of it? To make your bottom sore?

**Julie Christie** They call me a recluse. I really object! Is it because I don't have children? Because I live in Wales?

**Peter Hall** I don't understand why idiotic Tories don't understand that artistic competition is important. But then they'd sooner have no art at all.

**Gérard Depardieu** Wine leads to everything.



## GLUTTONY

**Carrie Fisher** I had my stomach pumped. It was a fairly graphic illustration that my way wasn't working.

**Mark Tully** [Archbishop Runcie] told me I liked wine, women and song too much and that my face was more appropriate in the pub than in the pulpit.

**Gérard Depardieu** Wine leads to everything.

**Adrian Edmondson on being at a single-sex boarding school** It just taught me to be a delinquent. I never had any reason to be responsible for myself, and that's why I was drunk for 10 years of my life.

**Keith Richards on being raided by the police in 1967** It's difficult to forget, with 10 people in a room coming down off LSD, and looking out the window, hearing a knock on the door and sayin', 'There are some funny little midgets outside, all dressed the same.'

## AVARICE

**Sir Richard Rogers, architect, on being asked how much he earns** Too much, probably.

**Demi Moore on her \$12m paycheck** I'm grateful that the producers were willing to show their faith in what I would contribute to the film by paying me the money. It was not only showing a belief in me but in all women.

**Ted Honderich, philosopher, on why he took on editing the *Oxford Companion to Philosophy*** First I thought it would increase my fame, second I thought I'd get a lot of money, and third, I thought I could do it on the side.

**Barbara Taylor Bradford** Some say, 'You don't have any mundane details about everyday life in your books', and I say, 'No, because nobody would read them'.

**Jessica Mitford on her book about undertakers** It was such bliss when all the undertakers came out with virulent attacks - and so great for sales.

**Imelda Marcos** Of course, when there was a shoe fair, they would insist on giving me pairs.

## ENVY

**Wayne Fontana, Sixties pop singer** I just don't know what it is that makes the Stones more popular than Wayne Fontana and the Mindbenders. If you knew what it was you could tap into it. I mean, who's popular now? Oasis - and what a bunch of arseholes they are.

**Will Self** Jim Crace is one of those writers for whom I have huge literary envy, simply because of what people write on the back of his books. It's what I call blurb admiration.

**Alan Bleasdale on Julie Walters** Look, she can even make a Clorets' ad funny. That is talent.

**Suggs from Madness** I'm not saying I'm the new Mozart, but I'm not trying to be the new Mozart, because Mozart didn't write words! Ha ha! Couldn't write 'em, could he? Wanker!

**Academic at a Stoppard premiere** That's why God made poets and novelists - so the rest of us could get published.

## PRIDE

**Sir John Drummond, ex-Proms director** I'm not, perhaps, naturally a number two.

**Bill McCartney, American Christian cult leader** I don't mean to offend you, I'm just trying to explain that it's hard for us to talk on the same level because you don't have God's spirit.

**Slash of Guns 'n' Roses** I like to maintain a pseudo-humble level of existence. I didn't have aspirations to become a star.

**Barry White on women**

If you ask the majority of women who work, 'Would you work if you had a man who really loved you, who was really there for you,' she'd tell you, 'No, I wouldn't work.' And that's the way it's meant to be.

**Bob Monkhouse on Royal shows** Checking that bloody box, sweating on whether Prince Philip's cracked a smile is not my way of building a career. I've done my time on royals. I'm buggered if I'm going to put my arse on the line.

**Tony Mortimer of East 17 on whether he is frightened of talking about intimate matters** Not since I found out that I've got a big dick.

**Frank Warren after being shot** I used to think I was God ... I don't go in for all that stuff now.

**Julio Iglesias on the sensuality of success** When I go on stage, my skin is 10 times more sensitive. I touch my body continuously because I don't believe it.

**Darcus Howe on his interviewing technique** That's how people discover things, by inquisition. I mean that in the inquisitive sense, not the Spanish Inquisition - that was a bit heavy.

**Jane Horrocks on urinating on stage in *Macbeth*** Sometimes there's only a little trickle and I think oh, that's a bit of a boring old piss tonight [assumes reviewer's voice] 'a disappointing piss'. But sometimes it comes flooding out like a horse, which is excellent, although the woman playing the gentlewoman gets a bit splattered on, which she doesn't really care for.

**Lesley Garrett on *Die Fledermaus*** It was a crazy, wonderful, visually extravagant evening of which my bottom was the sensation. I completely upstaged the whole thing.

**John Hegarty of Bartle Bogle Hegarty** The Volkswagen campaign was to advertising what the Sistine chapel is to painting.

**Jim Dale on playing Fagin in *Oliver!*** You want depth? Read the book.

**Sir Georg Solti** I can only do music one way. My way. Take it or leave it.

**Ken Russell on Oliver Reed** He called me Jesus for obvious reasons.

**Gillian Armstrong** As one of the first women working in a man's world, I was supposed to be aggressive, stony and tough. But maybe I was actually just good.

**Marcel Marceau** What I did as a one-man show throughout the world, no one can do again in the 20th century.

**Isabelle Huppert** There is no better memory for an actress than to be called up by a director. To be elected. To have someone say, 'I want you.' It means that they dreamed of you and thought about you for days and days and days.

**Arthur Miller** I like to be around anyone who enjoys my speeches.  
**Felicity Kendal on appearing naked in *Indian Ink*** I'm not a great flasher obviously, but I'm not a shy person either.

**Virginia Bottomley, three weeks before the Government announced a 3 per cent cut in Arts funding** There will be no cuts in government spending on the arts. The lottery is not an alternative to government funding.

**Terry Hands to Georgina Brown** Why did you choose journalism? You were obviously a nice person once.

Additional research by Rachel Halliburton  
Illustration by Chris Priestley



## shopping



Big-league shoppers (from left): Imelda Marcos, Elizabeth Taylor, Eva Peron and Ivana Trump. Whether it is a real problem will depend on the size of your bank account



# Hey, big spender!

Did you buy something totally pointless in the sales? Then you may need professional help. By Serena Mackesy

If one were to look for an example of the illogicality of human behaviour, one would hardly need to look further than the enthusiasm with which we embrace the January sales. You, like much of the rest of the country, have probably spent a good deal of the last month grumbling about the hell of shopping for Christmas: those hours spent in overcrowded, overheated environments spending like there was no tomorrow. And yet you have probably also quietly made sure that there is still a little bit of stretch left in your credit card, that free Saturday afternoon – this one, possibly – that will allow you to indulge in another explosion of the feeding frenzy that is rampant consumerism.

Shopping is great fix, especially for some reason for women. This is possibly partly to do with the hunter-gatherer differences between the sexes. Men on the whole are more focused than women on individual tasks, preferring to perform one at a time to their satisfaction; women juggle. Thus, men, when they shop, shop with a particular target in mind and lose interest when it is attained, while women take pleasure in the shopping itself. A woman shopping will generally go to all the shops and look at everything; a man will go to Burtons and buy a shirt.

The act of buying, though, gives both sexes a sense of instant gratification and considerable pleasure. Many of us indulge that gratification regularly and without worry.

But this is not always the case. Consider the words of Lucy, 55: "I get with-

drawal symptoms and feel depressed if I don't go to the shops. I tried staying in on a Saturday last week and went for a long walk with my husband. We got back at 4.20pm and I was sweating. I thought 'I have to go into town' and I thought 'Well, what am I looking for? I don't need anything, but I can always see something'.

Lucy is a member of a significant slice of society whose consumption has tipped over from normal gratification into addictive behaviour: shopaholics, if you like. A recent American study estimated that compulsive shopping patterns affect between 2 and 6 per cent of the population, 95 per cent of those affected being women. Although we are all capable of impulse buying, these people regularly purchase things for which they have little need or use – Lucy, for instance has four double wardrobes and an attic stuffed with never-worn clothes – and with little or no regard for the financial consequences.

Dr Richard Elliott, of St Anne's College, Oxford, says: "Of course, it's actually no different from ordinary shopping in other people. It's just so extreme in many dimensions. And, of course, one person's problem shopping is another person's well. If I can afford it... It's a problem in terms of the frequency with which it happens and the levels of debt that can build up. Without wishing to trivialise it, Imelda Marcos may have had a problem with the number of shoes she needed to buy, but it wasn't a problem to her."

Dr Elliott, together with Professor

Kevin Gournay of London University's Institute of Psychiatry and Sue Eccles of the Oxford School of Management Studies, published a paper on the subject last year and are currently half-way through a government funded project investigating it further. Many forms of addictive behaviour, shopping included, have roots in depression, loneliness, lack of a sense of fulfilment or childhood deprivations, but they were surprised to find, within these parameters, two very distinct types of compulsive shopper who they had not anticipated encountering. As well as those who need the frenzied fix of instant gratification to ward off their problems, there are also Revenge shoppers, and what they have labelled Existential shoppers.

The revenge shopper falls into a very distinct sociological grouping. "They are women who married very young to professional men and are now in or nearing their forties. They feel that their husband is treating them as a young, unsophisticated person but that they have changed and developed and now have all kinds of justification for being treated in a different way. They cannot get it from their partner, and are quite consciously hitting at him through their behaviour," says Elliott. "This is hard to call compulsive shopping, as compulsion by definition is not something that you can rationally control. These are not women who cannot help themselves. They are acting fully rationally. And one can see when they describe their situations that they feel powerless to

influence their partner. This is one way of doing it."

Rachel, a 38-year-old from the Home Counties, is one such. "On average, I can spend up to £200-£300 a time on nothing. It's like sweetie money." A heavily indulged youngest daughter, she married a man who while frequently absent himself indulges her spends: "Well," he says, "You were spoilt as a child and I suppose I will have to continue the tradition." She feels that he doesn't acknowledge that she has matured during the course of their marriage – with both motherhood and her own part-time career, but "I just can't get him to understand that I've changed – I just don't know what to do any more... [the shopping] is a way of getting back at him. I say, 'well, if you took more notice of me... then I wouldn't have to do it, would I?'"

Another 51-year-old woman puts it this way: "I think I was a bit child-like when we married... but, of course, I've changed over the years – and I want more responsibility and... well... respect, really, than I'm getting." A man's wallet, it seems, is often the only place to hit where it really hurts.

Lucy, meanwhile, is an Existential shopper. Says Elliott: "These women have for some reason chosen shopping as a means of developing their skills and expressing their personality. They see it not as a haphazard rush round the shops, but as a skilled and concentrated activity... what looks on the outside like a frenetic rush, madly getting rid of money, was not that but was

a search for the absolute buy". It is in a way a search for perfection. "And it gives them a sense of self, too. A sense of power. Rather than being a compulsive shopper, they have a sense of heightened skills. But, of course, they do it repetitively, so they're not fully in control of it."

Indeed, Lucy, who has often had to use savings to pay off credit cards and loans, has often bought "one of every colour" of an item of clothing. She once bought the entire Burberry range, and feels "a great sense of pride when I find that 'perfect outfit'... even though it ends up either in the loft or hanging unworn in a wardrobe."

In the meantime, the stores abound with tales of crazed consumption. Peter Villasey of Harrods was a mine of hair-raising stories. "This man came in once in search of an alarm clock. We had an exhibition of antique clocks at the time, and he ended up spending £250,000 in half an hour. Another customer came to buy china during the sale and walked out with £60,000 worth of crockery. None of it in the event marked down. But the best recently was the man who wanted a Christmas present for his son. He picked out a Sega Gamegear computer-game console, which sold at around £100. Then he had it customised with gold and precious stones. It ended up costing £55,000."

Mary Harrods customers, of course, are well equipped to afford such excesses. But what of less elevated mortals? Richard Elliott believes that credit card companies have some measure of responsibility. "I don't honestly think

that having credit cards makes people go out shopping, but it is certainly a facilitator."

Lloyds Access, when asked, claimed to be unable to provide any suitable case studies. When Mr Elliott approached a credit card company for funding for the current project, he "got a very sharp note back saying 'nothing to do with us. Why are you asking us in the first place?'" Strange paranoia for such benevolent organisations.

So, is there help available for those suffering from this affliction? At the moment, no. The courts rarely, if ever, refer compulsive shoppers for treatment as they do those with gambling or alcohol problems. "They tend," said a practitioner at London's psychotherapy Centre, "to see it as a moral problem rather than an emotional one. I've never heard of the courts suggesting therapy for debtors." Elliott, Gournay and Eccles wish, as part of their study, to set up a self-help group or groups. They currently have upwards of 200 people on their database, and would welcome approaches from others for whom any of this rings a bell. "Most of the people on our list," says Elliott, "have come forward out of a sense of desperation. They don't just want to be part of the survey. They want some help."

If you'd like to join the self-help group, contact: Sue Eccles, School of Management Studies, University of Oxford, Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford OX1 6ME (01865 228470/fax 01865 228471)



## AUCTIONS

Why is everybody and his dog piling into the salerooms in the dead holiday season?

No London auctions until next week, after the Christmas break: but at Christie's South Kensington this Tuesday, the empty silence of the salerooms will echo to the footfalls of specialists eager to hang their British and Continental pictures five days before viewing officially begins. Would-be buyers in the know will be welcome to a sneak preview.

The hols are a paradoxical time in the London auction houses: everybody assumes that everybody else will be away and that there will be bargains to be had. Result: everybody and his dog piles into the saleroom and bidding becomes lively. Last year, the British and Continental picture sale was not held until 18 January – by which time turkey had been long-forgotten and dealers were ensconced once more at their Morocco desks. It made a buoyant 87 per cent by value, 80 per cent by lot.

These annual sales of mostly Victorian paintings are minor, in the £200-£3,000 range. This year's is on Thursday 11 January (10.30am). The auctioneers hope that after nine days of viewing instead of only four, and with scarcely any other views to visit,

demand will have built up steam. The star lots are 30 19th-century textile designs from Aubusson, France, famous for its Arcadian landscapes and floral patterns since the 17th century. This is the last of four selections from the same collection and the experience has been that they sell for half as much again as the estimate.

The designs for curtains, carpets, cushions, in bodycolour or oil, owe their style to textile technology – blocky forms separating patches of wool or silk of different monochromes. They have a *trompe l'oeil* effect – paintings that look like tapestries. Presumably, one is expected to commit the solecism that British Victorian designers such as Owen Jones and Christopher Dresser warned against: hanging on the wall flower designs viewed from above and intended for carpets.

There is a tantalising rummage lot: a roll of about 30 fragments of designs of various sizes, all unframed, and without estimate – meaning that less than £200 is expected. A picture framer might find these oddments a good buy. There is also an Alexis de Leeuw oil of a frozen river with figures and landscape. Very seasonal.

De Leeuw's work can sell for up to £4,000 in prime condition. This one is estimated only £800-£1,000 because of a restorer's over-enthusiastic "impainting". That is, there is too much of the restorer's paint and not enough of the artist's. Even the signature has probably been tidied, forcing the catalogue to resort to the description "attributed to".

You can pick up paintings in such sales for as little as £100. They are by unknowns, presumably amateurs, such as R. Falls, who painted Gibraltar Rock, lot 158, in 1893. The picture bears no estimate and is not considered worthy of an illustration, but if viewing convinces you that R. Falls wielded a handy brush, get in there and bid. At least the auctioneers have a soft spot for the picture. These days, with the market struggling for recovery, even minor sales are "tight" and auctioneers try hard to avoid the stigma of trying to palm off dross. Use your eyes. They might have got it right.

For provincial auctions and fairs, see pages 20/21

John Windsor

## The novelty drinks guide

By Emily Green and Robin Crowther

If you do not teach your children to drink, they may learn themselves this year. Supermarkets, off-licenses and cash and carry outlets are all stocking alcoholised novelty drinks aimed at the youth market.

Though our request was for novelties to test, some wholesalers and retailers sent us samples of their more grown-up products. The contrast was extraordinary, and useful. Yes, we loved Theakston's Black Sheep Ale, the 21-year-old Sainsbury Royal Elgin whisky, and the 16-year-old Speyside. The 10-year-old tawny port was mellow and divine, and the vintage Doves sprightly and beautiful. How, we came to wonder, can the same shops that sell these stock apple wines dressed up as tequila

cocktail, spiked lemonade, and various rather sinister candy drinks? Only the vodka, the chic new spirit of preference in the youth market, showed class. Notably, the Polmos Wodka Wyborowa Pure Grain is a beautifully made spirit. May in 1996 it be drunk with the dignity it deserves.

### Novelty Drinks

Hoppy's Ginger Brew "Thirst Quencher": Strong ginger flavour, but with a chemically edge. Sinister to label booze "thirst quencher".  
Hooch Alcoholic Lemonade: Nasty commercial lemonade spiked for juvenile delinquents.  
Jett's Lime Clear Beer: described itself as "cold filtered". Pure cleaning fluid.

Smirnoff Moscow Mule: Its rust-coloured, metal-effect bottle is a packaging crime. Drink tastes as if it involves ginger ale and Angostura bitters.

Marks & Spencer Vodka Lemon and Tonic: Harsh, not a patch on the real stuff.  
Sainsbury's Piranha Alcoholic Lemonade: Inexcusable.  
Mrs Pucker's Citrus Brew: Foul-tasting skosh aimed at kiddie market. Entirely reprehensible.

Mrs Pucker's Alcoholic Orange: A melted Mr Man lolly. Nasty.  
Strung Out Shock: Urine soaked alley on the nose, very foul tasting too.  
Red Hot Summer: Comes in rocket-shaped, pocket-sized container that prompted a witty lady onlooker to inquire, "Does it come with batteries?" Aimed at kids

who want to sneak drinks into dance halls. Chillis lend glowing warmth to after-taste. Rather good.  
Cactus Jack Tequila Shooter: More pickle in the pocket-packaging.  
Rovers Mexican Sunrise: Acid yellow chemistry experiment. Cough medicine taste. Truly the worst of the bunch.

### Vodkas

Smirnoff Mellow Russian Vodka: Black Label: Very drinkable. Has to be near and very cold.  
Polmos Zabrowka Bison Brand Vodka: Composty.  
Polmos Wodka Wyborowa Pure Grain: Smooth, full-bodied, viscous, sweet edge, excellent.  
Polmos Krolewska: Pretty bottle. Raw tasting.







# A day in the life of the bra-fitters

the thing about...

# Clinique products

[illegible]



# These are the rising stars of 1996

Which names will you hear everywhere in the year ahead? David Benedict canvassed the views of the Independent's critics

## ART



Gillian Wearing (above) has yet to have a full-scale solo show, but any curator with an eye on the contemporary scene in 1996 will mention her name at the drop of a hat: they're all after her. Part of the Goldsmiths' school of new British art, Wearing works in video using herself as her central subject matter and, like a lot of women artists of her generation, follows in the footsteps of Cindy Sherman, whose experiments with identity and disguise have made her one of America's best known contemporary artists. Wearing's coup this year was showing her "Western Security" piece about cowboys in the Hayward Gallery's new foyer space.

There are those who consider Jake & Dinos Chapman to be something approaching cowboys, but like them or not – and there are people preparing to mount the barricades on both sides – the brothers are on the edge of making it big. Their work is designed to shock and has certainly done so thus far. Their figures are playful, their humour very boys-own variant. All their art bears witness to their obsession with mixing up periods and genres, and displays incredible craft skills – using sculpture and film – mixed with their particular brand of prurient imagery. So far the brothers have only shown at the gallery of their dealer, Victoria Miro, but they have already established a serious international reputation for themselves and, if our British taste buds can cope with them, are possible contenders for the Turner prize shortlist in 1996.

Georgina Starr has also attracted considerable attention from abroad. At home, she is best known for her video "Crying", in which she sobbed continuously. She also works in multi-media, with photographs, tape and video, while the complex narratives in her work have meant her art appeals widely. "Visit to a Small Planet", currently touring in the British Art Show, recaptures what it's like to be a pre-adolescent. Her work goes on show at the Tate's new Art Now space in February, which should place her firmly on the art map.

## THEATRE

In a former life, Philip Osment (right) was an actor with Shared Experience for Mike Alfreds. In the mid-Eighties he turned into a playwright with Gay Sweatshop's runaway success *This Island's Mine*. Under Osment's own direction, the 45 speaking parts – played by a cast of seven – highlighted his gift for beautifully dovetailed structure and subtle characterisation. After the success of *The Dearly Beloved* and this year's emotionally eloquent *What I Did In The Holidays*, next year's *Flesh and Blood* will be his third play for Mike Alfreds and will tour the country hot on the heels of *The Undertaking*, another new play for Gay Sweatshop, which should lift that company's recent mixed fortunes.

Alexandra Gilbreath is also going places in more ways than one. She attracted considerable attention as a feisty Regina in Katie Mitchell's RSC production of *Ghosts*, and then



starred as the central character in Phyllis Nagy's acclaimed *Disappeared*. Jude Kelly's uneven *King Lear* was notable for Gilbreath's remarkable Regan, a frightening portrait of a woman on the edge of madness. In 1996 she takes on the title role in English Touring Theatre's *Hedda Gabler*.

James Macdonald has directed countless well-received productions, but his meticulous and startlingly clear direction of new plays – Caryl Churchill's translation of *Thyestes*, for instance, Nick Grosso's *Peaches* or Sam Shepard's *Simpatico* – has so far succeeded in enhancing the reputations of the writers rather than advancing his own career. With *The Changing Room* in the Royal Court Classics season in February, and *Harry and Me* at the Royal Court in March, he should finally receive the overdue attention previously accorded to other more flashy directors.

## POP



Raissa (above) haven't released a thing yet, but their debut gig in darkest Harlow in early 1995 was a stark, urgent affair which proved they could carry off their sparky melodies on stage. Singer Rice's out-of-body vocals are just the icing on a very rich cake. There are echoes of dub, trip-hop, bubblegum pop and the Cocteau Twins. But what matters most is that Raissa write tunes that are harder to shake than cold sores. Their first single, "Your Summer-time", is out early February: they have recorded their album with Mark Saunders, who co-produced Tricky's *Maxinquaye*, the album of this year: they play live at London's LA2 on 26 January. And, frankly, your life is incomplete without them.

In all the Britpop hoo-hah, The Bluetones were rather forgotten, confused with the insipid Cast and caught up in a strange sub-mod movement. In fact, their songs are carefully crafted pop gems, from the gorgeous "Blutonic" to the bouncy, irresistibly catchy new single "Slight Return" (released in January). The latter should win them untold acclaim and riches – if the album's half as good, it will be one of the year's essential purchases.

It was a good year for 60 Ft Dolls. A place on the NME's Brit Bus tour, a support slot for the Boo Radleys (who they blew clear out of the water, no trouble) and every hint of rock 'n' roll behaviour relayed to adoring fans by a salivating music press. And 1996 will be better. This Newport band fly the punk flag but their songs – "Happy Shopper", about a tough transvestite, and "Pig Valentine", a dig at Saturday night clubbers – are too ditty to be nailed to any genre.

American Joan Osborne is a complex derivative of her times and place. There are hints of Bonnie Raitt about her mannered, bluesy rasp, and her rhythm section is tuned for the roadhouse, yet virtually all the material on her debut album (out this spring on Mercury) is shot through with the kind of off-kilter, art-house theatricality that makes "alternative" such a popular word in American mainstream culture. Watch out for dates next month.

## CLASSICAL

"Nothing short of incredible" is what star American baritone Thomas Hampson called it when, just two weeks ago, on the Monday before Christmas, the 29-year-old Daniel Harding (right) braved a strike-bound Paris to score a standing ovation deputising at short notice for Simon Rattle at the helm of the musical knight's Birmingham band. All the more incredible given that neither work on the programme – Schoenberg's spiky 1942 Piano Concerto and Mahler's massive vocal symphony, *Das Lied von der Erde* – is exactly standard repertoire even for full-time maestros. Let alone a tyro with only two previous orchestral concerts to his cv. But then Harding is no ordinary beginner: Rattle, who took him on as his assistant while he was still a music student in Manchester, has gone on record as stating that his young protégé is better than he himself was at the same age. When Harding conducted Boulez's *Eclat* in London last March, critics compared his economy and precision of technique to that of the French master himself. Now acting as Abbado's assistant in Berlin, Harding is due to celebrate his 21st birthday as he means to go on – conducting (at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw). Definitely a beat to follow for 1996.



but, Emma Johnson apart, which BBC Young Musician of the Year has ever become a household name? The stunning cellist and 1994 winner Natalie Clein, 18, should soon remedy that when she delivers a reprise of her heart-tugging, title-snatching Elgar Concerto in a new Channel 4 documentary, *Elgar's Tenth Muse*, starring James Fox as the ageing enigma.

It's doubtful if 1996 will do for any of its anniversaried composers – Anton Bruckner (died 1896), Howard Hanson (born the same year), Virgil Thomson (ditto) and Manuel de Falla (died 1946) – what 1995 did for Purcell, but one name worth watching among the living is that of David Sawer. At 34, he's been around, but the CD issue of his 1992 Prom premiere *Byrman Wood* should perk up his profile while Sinfonietta and BBC commissions come down the pipeline.

## FILM

Ly Tyler is a safe bet as a face of 1996, during which she will become more famous for acting than for being the daughter of Acrosmith's Steven Tyler. She survived a rocky script for *Silence Fall*, came into her own in *Heavy* (released yesterday), and will next be seen in Bertolucci's *Stealing Beauty* alongside Jeremy Irons. In between fielding business offers from Woody Allen and Tom Hanks (who wants her to appear in his directorial debut), she should find time for more performances as dazling as *Heavy*.

Michael Winterbottom (pictured) is hardly a new face to television viewers – having directed *Cracker* and Roddy Doyle's *Family* – but now this one-time apprentice to Lindsay Anderson is proving himself capable of setting cinema screens alight, too. He directed *Butterfly Kiss* this year, eliciting Saskia Reeves's most fearless performance yet, and his version of *Jude the Obscure*, starring Christopher Eccleston, will be with us in the new year.

The screenplay that Paul Laverty has written for Ken Loach's new film (provisionally called *Curla's Song*) is drawn from what he saw as a human rights lawyer and in-



vestigator in Nicaragua, a post he held for two and a half years. The film tells the story of a Glaswegian bus driver who falls for a young Nicaraguan woman and travels back to her home country with her. Currently shooting in Glasgow and Nicaragua, the film should see Laverty attract the success that his talent and commitment deserve.

If you were unlucky enough to see *Cocktail* you'll recognise Elisabeth Shue, but nothing can prepare you for her performance as a Vegas prostitute who falls for suicidal alcoholic Nicholas Cage in Mike Figgis's new film *Leaving Las Vegas*. Shue is raw and moving: the film feels like an announcement of her arrival. She has already won the Los Angeles Film Critics' Award for Best Actress, and an Oscar must surely be within sniffing distance.

## And watch out for:

### ADAM COOPER ballet



The Royal Ballet has so far failed to capitalise upon Cooper's talent, which shone forth when he nipped away to star in Matthew Bourne's hugely theatrical *Swan Lake*. Next year it tours the country, which will make him a nationwide, fully fledged star.

### JOHN HANNAH acting



ITV's *McCallum* may not prove to be the vehicle that propels him into the hearts and minds of the nation, but Hannah is set for great things after splendid work in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and as a member of the Steve Coogan repertory company.

### JUSTIN WEBB broadcasting



With his Fifties matinee-idol looks, Webb represents the softer face of BBC interviewing. He recently progressed from the comfort run to reading the main evening news and now looks set to take political confrontation into a gentler era after the Parnham years.

### Next Week: The best shows of 1996

Make sure you don't miss out – make a date in your diary to catch our preview guide to the best arts events of the coming year: from Simon Callow's new RSC staging of *Les Enfants du Paradis* to Twyla Tharp's return to the Royal Ballet, from David Alden's *ENO Tristan* to the coming of the big Cézanne show to the Royal Academy

## reviews

### BALLET

#### Les Patineurs, Royal Opera House, London

For all his heavyweight footwork, Tetsuya Kumakawa only scratches the surface of Frederick Ashton's subtle skating piece

Frederick Ashton's *Les Patineurs*, set to Constance Lambert's neatly tailored arrangement of some of Meyerbeer's most catchy tunes, is a ballet about skaters and skating. Nothing remarkable in that, given that dancing has long been an important part of skating's artistry. But because *Les Patineurs* was first performed in 1937, it reveals something of the way in which people skated or ice-danced – 60 years ago. And that, perhaps, is the clue to why this most lightweight of Ashton's works is more than just a quaint picture of winter recreation.

These days, ice rinks seem full of rowdy youths who can barely stand upright in their support boots. I doubt that every skating pond observed or imagined by Ashton when he made *Les Patineurs* qualified as a model of refined social interaction. But the ballet "skaters" here have ventured out for nothing more than some well-mannered sliding and gliding. Nearly all progress is more ambitious manoeuvres, but Ashton reserves the most conspicuous feats of virtuosity for the Blue Boy, a lone figure who wheel-jumps around the stage and is left spinning on the spot as the curtain falls. Unfortunately, Tetsuya Kumakawa treats the role of the Blue Boy in much the same way that he treats any role: with an

excess of technique coupled with an irritating slipperiness. Sure, he's meant to dazzle us, but Kumakawa turns the choreography's fleet-footed teasers into a series of hollow stunts. The effect is ruinous to the intrinsic, gentle charm of Ashton's ballet. He's the ballet's outsider for all the wrong reasons – accosting us with tricks that seem self-congratulatory and vacuous next to the occasional swanking of Ashton's merry band of skaters.

In the work's central *pas de deux* – an extended romantic interlude for a couple in white, fur-trimmed Sunday best – Stuart Cassidy and Muriel Valtat demonstrate all the shapely, unhurried elegance of movement and phrasing. Dated yet still charming, *Les Patineurs* is a vision of that "celebrated sweet kind" of skating, as the great American critic Edwin Denby described Sonja Henie's 1940s ice dances.

Less sweet but more twee is the revival of that seasonal money-spinner, *Tales of Beatrix Potter*. Ashton's film choreography transposed to the stage by Anthony Dowell. Organised as a collection of dances for Potter's animal characters – Mrs Tiggy-winkle, Jeremy Fisher, Squirrel Nutkin – it's most likely to appeal to children and to the sort of adults who still collect



'Les Patineurs': Dated yet charming

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

cuddly toys. Potter's unsentimental treatment of her own animals – the real-life model for Mrs Tiggy-winkle was put down with chloroform – is barely hinted at, although the fox who chases Jeremia Puddle-duck in the hope of a tasty meal, and the bacon truck which

pulls up next to Pigling Bland and Pig-wig provide some respite from all the lopsided bunny cuteness of this 70-minute animal fare.

At the Royal Opera House, London WC2, 1, 5, 6 Jan. Booking: 0171-304 4000

### TELEVISION

#### Knowing Me Knowing Yule... with Alan Partridge (BBC2)

It's not easy being incompetent – Alan Partridge is to chat-show interview what Rudolf Nureyev was to spot welding. But maybe it's time to get real. By Jasper Rees

Nick Brownfield has already demonstrated this week, as on sundry other outings, that incompetence is a time-consuming business. It takes far longer to portray a slowly unfolding cock-up than a success in which all runs smoothly. Alan Partridge is one step up from Brownfield in the evolutionary scale of broadcasting competence: at least he gets the interviews, but conducts them so appallingly that he extracts no more from them than if he had interrogated a tree trunk.

It may well be that, like Brownfield, Partridge will come to resemble a one-trick pony, solely programmed to unleash his rib-tickling intolerance on blameless sofa-fodder. He specialises in digging himself into very deep holes, and sometimes the process overruns. His cock-ups are only mock-ups, like the studio re-creation of the Partridge hearth, but their excruciating accuracy can cut too close to the bone.

The central conceit of *Knowing Me Knowing Yule...* with Alan Partridge was that the Christmas special has to go well to safeguard the second series. In reality, of course, the

BBC is gagging for another series, while the restless Partridge scriptwriters hum and ha and look for the window in their diaries. In fiction, Partridge tried to curry favour by inviting on to the show the chief commissioning editor for BBC television, a safely unreal post but none the less played by David Schneider as a trendy, worthy hybrid of Alan Yentob and Michael Jackson. Needless to say, Partridge's currying-favouring backfired: his final act was to glove the Beeb boss with a bird seasonally located in a pear tree.

Although in every sense a knockout joke, some other gags didn't pack quite the same punch. Our host quickly tired of the cross-dressing chef's saucy doubles entendres, and for once you were in sympathy with him. Sometimes the line between television that drags intentionally and television that just drags is not so very thick.

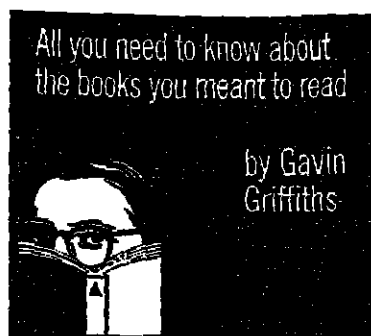
The details remain deliciously choice: Partridge's meretricious tangents and metaphors ("My show is your bell. Please peel it"), his instruction to researchers to find out if Dr Hook is a fully qualified GP. The pre-recorded

tour of Norwich, where Partridge jogs in the cathedral cloisters and shops after closing at Tandy, was the cleverest and most richly detailed segment of the show. Line of the night revealed that, since the bombing of Dresden, Norwich has boasted the most pre-Reformation churches in the world: an ingenious Partridgean cocktail of pointless East Anglian trumpet-blowing and pointed xenophobic triumphalism.

As for the chat, it might underwrite the basic joke to show Partridge getting something right. And it may be a heresy to suggest it, but it might even be worth switching his attention to real personalities instead of invented ones. Mrs Morton is already on this patch, and running out of volunteers, but he is clearly capable of attracting non-fictional guests because Mick Hucknall, plainly a fan doing the Partridge team a favour, came on to sing out the credits with a carol. Although it would involve sacrificing control over one half of the script and usher in the risk of genuine embarrassment, to go legit would bring a sense of real rather than feigned danger.



## books



This week:

**THE SCARLET LETTER (1850)**  
 by Nathaniel Hawthorne

**Plot:** This brief and morally strenuous novel is set in the Puritan community of 17th century Boston. In a leisurely introduction, Hawthorne establishes his identity of "narrator". The novel opens with Hester Prynne standing on an anachronistic public scaffold in front of a large, indignant crowd. She is charged with adultery but she won't name her lover. As a punishment she must be exposed to public abuse and is condemned to wear the letter "A" woven onto her clothes. In her arms she carries her illegitimate child, Pearl. Hester's husband is an English scholar who had sent her to Boston. He was to follow her but never turned up because he had been captured by Indians. He escaped and now stands among the spectators in disguise. Assuming the name of Roger Chillingworth he vows to uncover Hester's secret. He is a bit mad.

In fact, Pearl's father is the young minister, Arthur Dimmesdale. Arthur buries his guilt but, over the course of the book, it gnaws its way to the surface. Meanwhile, Hester's kindness to the community seems to change the meaning of the letter that she wears.

Chillingworth catches Arthur talking to Hester in the woods. Leaping to the correct conclusion, he begins to haunt Arthur and makes some rather suggestive remarks. Arthur loses control: after delivering a punchy Election Day sermon he finally stands with Hester and Pearl on the scaffold. He admits his guilt and that the letter "A" now means Arthur. With this semantic shift, he dies. Chillingworth's life is now void of meaning, and he realises it.

Pearl goes to Europe but Hester chooses to remain in the community and continue a life of contrition.

**Theme:** Hawthorne is one of the first American writers to note how the original settlers allowed the opportunity of the new continent to slip away. The first buildings in any community were always the church and the prison.

The romance (as Hawthorne called the book) illustrates the dangers and similarities of guilt and pride. Chillingworth and Dimmesdale are consumed by secrets and fail to live useful lives.

Hester's honesty becomes a blazon and her secret is protective rather than selfish. The letter "A" transforms her into a sort of female knight errant, rescuing the distressed.

**Style:** The narrative voice seems straightforward, but this is a deliberate illusion. The narrator is often ambiguous and enjoys withholding important "facts". Judgements are partial and conclusions left open.

**Chief strengths:** No facile answers are provided here. Hester is, after all, guilty: Pearl the "Eilin" child, has devilish traits; the Puritans are given their due. Chillingworth and Dimmesdale are villains because of their hypocrisy but remain sympathetic because they are both self-destructive. The reader is tempted to oversimplify and Hawthorne shows how such simplifications lead to tragedy.

**Chief weaknesses:** "The symbolism is overdone at times and becomes mechanical; it ceases to be impressive and grazes triviality." (Henry James)

Pearl's cute knowingsness has some of the same sugary stickiness as Dickens's dwarfish coddles, although Pearl is allowed to grow up and isn't assigned to a lucky home death-bed.

**What they thought of it then:** One or two early critics felt that Hawthorne was condoning adultery but it gently insinuated itself into classic status. Henry James, in 1879, affirmed his belief that it was the first genuine example of "literature" that America had managed to produce.

**What we think of it now:** D.H. Lawrence considered it "one of the greatest allegories in all literature" and his enthusiasm carried F.R. Leavis in its wake. Leavis places it in his nefarious "Great Tradition".

Postmodern critics love the idea of a character who is a letter and a letter whose meaning changes, at that. This opens up infinite possibilities of frenzied interpretation.

**Responsible for:** Henry James and his love of symbols: sacred founts, golden bowls, figures in carpets etc. Also the recent film with Demi Moore.

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# Marco Polo and the history with a hole

The world's most famous traveller never went to China, says a new book. Oh yes he did, says William Dalrymple

*Did Marco Polo go to China?* by Frances Wood, Secker & Warburg, £14.99

It has been a bad decade for Dead White Males. There was a time when death meant you could Rest In Peace, reasonably confident that the obituary writers would give a kindly gloss to your failures and achievements. No longer. Today, no sooner has a figure been laid to rest than the revisionists are exhuming the corpse and dancing on the cadaver. And the trend seems to be on the increase. The decade opened with Columbus receiving a full-scale assault from politically-correct American historians. (Discovered America? What about the Native Americans?). Now, so it seems, it's Marco Polo's turn.

This latest assault is the work of Frances Wood, the head of the Chinese Department of the British Library. Her claim that Marco Polo never went to China appears at first sight to be a particularly blatant example of the look-at-me school of revisionism. For what primary school student does not know about Polo? His book has been turned into a strip cartoon, a one-man show at the Edinburgh Festival, even a television drama starring Leonard (Mr Spock) Nimoy as Kubla Khan. Short of claiming that William the Conqueror never invaded England in 1066, it is difficult to think of any wheeze more likely to propel a medievalist into the limelight.

Wood's argument is largely based on negative evidence: that there is no mention of Marco Polo in the surviving Chinese archives; that Polo fails to notice any evidence of foot-binding, there's not a squeak about tea and nothing about the Great Wall. He is even taken to task for failing to spot the cormorants of the Yangtze.

Yet this line of attack rests on an extremely dubious interpretation of the whole thrust of the *Travels*. Polo was not writing a 13th-century Lonely Planet Guidebook. There is no reason for him to mention foot-binding

and cormorants, still less the Great Wall which, according to the most recent scholarship, did not exist at the time, the original wall having long decayed while the present structure (the work of the 16th-century Ming Dynasty) was yet to be erected.

Although the *Travels* has a reputation as a romantic book of adventures, Polo was in fact writing a dry factual guide to the commerce of the Silk Road, a book by a merchant for other merchants. It contained lists of goods available on the caravan routes, as well as advice on how to overcome the difficulties on the way: where to stock up with provisions, where to keep an eye out for robbers, how to cross a desert.

Despite the romantic topspin given to the book by Marco Polo's ghost writer, a Genoese troubadour named Rustichello (whose additions stand out as clearly as paragraphs of tabloid journalism inserted into a PhD), Polo's book seems to have been planned as an ordinary merchant's manual, not dissimilar to other manuals of the time such as the *Pratica della Mercatura* of the Florentine, Francesco Pegolotti. Indeed of its type it is a very fine example. The *Travels* contained more accurate and detailed information about the Silk Route than was available at the time from any other source, in either the Islamic or Christian worlds. Had the *Travels* really been cobbled together in Constantinople from travellers' gossip, it should be full of the dog-headed monsters and cabbage-like silk trees referred to by other medieval chroniclers.

As it is, while Polo may make what we would consider to be some odd omissions, he rarely gets anything wrong. In this respect, he stands in remarkable contrast to the great majority of medieval travellers' tales. Certainly Polo is a model of factual rigour compared to the best

contemporary Eastern attempt to describe Europe, *The History of the Franks* by the Persian scholar Rashid-ud-Din, which claims, for example, that the Pope was in the habit of using the Holy Roman Emperor's neck as a step to mount his horse.

Moreover there is nothing at all surprising in the idea that Marco Polo did go to China. In the 13th century the Mongol Empire stretched from Poland to the Pacific. It had excellent communications – infinitely more sophisticated than those of medieval Europe – and Polo was simply one of the great number of Europeans who took advantage of the opportunities this presented.

In the 1240s, a generation before Polo's journey, the Pope's envoy, John of Plano Carpini, had safely reached the Great Khan's camp in Outer Mongolia. Ten years later William of Rubrick made the same journey and records meeting a host of Europeans at his destination: among others, William Buchier, a goldsmith from Paris, some impoverished Germans and Basil "the son of an Englishman". By the early 14th century, the Vatican had established a Franciscan archbishop in Peking, while a whole colony of Venetians was operating on the Chinese coast of Hangchow and Zayton. When all this is taken into account, the conclusions of Dr Wood's book appear highly suspect, and raise far more questions than they answer.

That said, *Did Marco Polo go to China?* still makes fascinating reading. It is unusually well written, with a light and often waspishly witty tone; it is mercifully free of academic jargon; and it contains the most up-to-date discussion about Marco Polo's *Travels* available in English. Its wilder claims should be treated with extreme caution but it is still one of the liveliest introductions to the history of the Silk Route.



Marco Polo sets off from Venice – but where was he going?

Picture: E.T. Archives

## From stockings and pearls to wampum belts and sects

An approachable new book from a distinguished scholar brings three resourceful 17th-century women to life. By Sue Gaisford

**Women on the Margins**  
 by Natalie Zemon Davis  
 Harvard, £15.95

This is a book about three women who had, at first sight, little in common. One was a Jewish businesswoman, one a Lutheran naturalist, one an Ursuline nun. They were all born in different countries, the first two half-way through the 17th century, the third 50 years earlier. Yet Natalie Zemon Davis (the distinguished historian and author of *The Return of Martin Guerre*) sees many parallels between them, the strongest being their determination.

Glikl ben Judah Leib was married at 14 and had 12 surviving children. The daughter of a Hamburg trader, she was widowed at 43 and set about supporting her brood by dealing in stockings and pearls. She remarried but her second husband went bankrupt and died and she

moved in with a married daughter for the rest of her life. What makes her remarkable is the document she left for her descendants. In seven books, each marking a decade of human life, it is an example of the Jewish tradition of an "ethical will", an autobiography spiced with stories and parables drawn from folklore, the Bible, classical history and her own experiences. She comes across as a strong, brave, busy woman, and curiously modern – the type who'd be so keen to tell you what to do you'd never get her off the phone.

Maria Sibylla Merian left no autobiography behind her, but she did leave her husband. These days, we'd describe as a dangerous cult the group of strict Labadists whose community in Friesland she ran away to join.

**Women on the Margins**  
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Yet through them, she decided to visit Surinam where she developed her keen interest in the metamorphosis of insects, producing beautiful and accurate paintings of their life cycles, and picking many of the little creepy-crawlies in brandy.

As for Marie Guyart, she was probably the bravest of the lot. A wife at 17, a mother at 18 and a widow at 19, she left her son to her sister's care and joined the Ursuline order in Tours. From there, she travelled to Canada and founded a school (which still flourishes) high above the St



Natalie Zemon Davis: commitment

Lawrence river. It was tremendously wild country, populated by Iroquois, Hurons and Algonquians – people then known as Savages – whose languages she learnt and whom she came to love. She

was a mystic and a teacher whose deeply affectionate letters to her son portray a wisdom and fortitude rare in any age.

Each of these three deserves her own biography: together they represent the resilience and resourcefulness of women determined to follow their destiny. Davis has written a profoundly scholarly book about them but she has also attempted to make them approachable. Sometimes this works, particularly when she goes into details: Glikl complains that her children are spoilt and dissatisfied with the simple pleasures of life; Maria Sibylla nurtures daughters and caterpillars in her busy Dutch kitchen; Marie Guyart, in her last agony, is concerned only for the welfare of her beloved Savages. It works less well when Davis

attempts to unite the three in a kind of resuscitation exercise, a short play in which they all grumble at being thrown together, and when she justifies her book in terms of her own delight in following their adventures. Nor is it a good idea to publish so many pictures in poor quality black and white reproductions. The Torah binders "embroidered by women for the circumcision of their sons", the alarming Waiyami wasp mats and wampum belts look sadly dull, and Maria Sibylla's fastidious paintings cry out for modern colour printing. But these are quibbles. To read this passionately committed book is to feel admiration for the efforts of such brave women to make the most of their lives, and gratitude to Natalie Zemon Davis for celebrating them.

## Bungalows and giant bananas

Henry Sutton's first novel is an assured, likeable tale of love and betrayal among the over-70s. By Hugo Barnacle

Percy rarely went to Yarmouth. People living in Gorleston rarely did... Gorleston was much quieter, much safer. But it was the noise and danger of Great Yarmouth that Percy wanted now.

The Norfolk seaside town of the title still has beach huts, a pier and a couple of hotels. Owing to an over-enthusiastic decision by the council, it also has, in summer, buses disguised as giant bananas. But no one has been on holiday there for 20 years and, except for a new estate populated by Americans working the North Sea rigs, its population is on the elderly side.

Shy, trusting widower Percy, retired from a career in packaging

for Birds Eye, is about to embark on an affair with dangerous, man-eating widow Queenie, the racist of five Gorleston sisters. She dyes her hair orange, chainsmokes, shouts "Coo-ee!" at people and likes to do stunt-driving tricks in her Metro on Marine Parade, usually at lunchtime so that the more decrepit clientele in the prime-scented dining rooms of the seafaring hotels can all see and be shocked by her.

It is of course Queenie who lures Percy into driving his Cavalier through Yarmouth's pedestrian precinct, riding the roller-coaster with her, smoking under the No Smoking sign in the Living Jungle exhibition and, back at

**Gorleston**  
 by Henry Sutton  
 Sceptre, £9.99

her Gorleston bungalow, tumbling into bed. "She started to moan and groan. 'I love you, I love you,' he whispered as the consultations twinkled above 16 Yallop Avenue, Gorleston-on-Sea."

Love among the aged is in danger of becoming a clichéd subject, but Henry Sutton manages it well. At 32 he is himself getting on a bit for a first novelist and the benefits of age and experience show. There are hardly any failed stylistic enter-

prises or sentimental excesses till the end. By making Percy one of a notoriously buttoned-up lower-middle-class type – "he had never undressed in front of his wife and never had sex with anyone else at all" – Sutton is able to treat him, convincingly, like a naïve and romantic teenage boy. The affair with Queenie is thus ridiculous, but no more so than certain events that Sutton and his readers can probably recall from their own lives.

Percy becomes fascinated after one first glimpse. He tactically makes friends with Queenie's purple-rinsed sister Toots, brings up Queenie's sacred name in every conversation, discovers her address and drives by her house pointlessly, stakes out shops where

he might run into her, and gallantly believes that she is not the callous heartbreaker everybody says she is. All that teenage stuff.

The outcome is unsurprising, as we are left in no doubt that Queenie is the typical "pretty one" of the family, a 70-plus version of the spoilt, ruthless bitch we've all fallen for at some time. This leads to the book's one real problem, apart from the over-heavy irony attending Percy's fond hopes. The end of the affair, being so predictable, does not make a sufficiently strong pay-off, so Sutton has to provide another one.

Percy falls back on the memory of his late wife and their long happy marriage. He then finds out, in an abrupt and contrived

twist, that all was not entirely as he believed it to be in that department either. Sutton's sense of humour falters, a false, melodramatic note is struck, and the novel's last line is a clunker.

"He put the car into gear," it says. "He knew he could never go back." As Percy is parked on the cliff-top at the time, facing out to sea, we need to know whether he's engaging reverse and planning to leave town or engaging first and planning to go over the top (along with Sutton) for a silly, suicidal finale. We aren't told. The withheld resolution, such a dismal feature of Sixties TV scripts, won't really do any more. But on the whole *Gorleston* is an assured, likeable piece of work.



# When Britannia ruled the waves

Once upon a time, the Royal Navy was more than just an armed service. It was a passion. By Jan Morris

The Oxford Illustrated History of the Navy ed. J.R.H.H., Oxford, £25

This collection of essays declares itself the definitive one-volume history of the Royal Navy, and concludes with an assessment of the Navy in 1993 – a naval service, the editor says, “of which the nation can be proud”. The truth is that the nation is neither proud nor ashamed of the Navy. It doesn’t care two hoots about the Navy, except perhaps as the subject of rather embarrassing television films. Like Britain itself, the Royal Navy reached its true finale with the Great Victory of 1945: since then it has simply been, as everyone knows, just a contributory flotilla to the admiralty of the Americans.

National self-consequence is in poor taste now, but half a century ago nobody could possibly have sneered when the King of England crossed the English Channel in one of his warships, Royal Standard at the mainmast, to observe the invasion of Normandy. The immense maritime operation had been overwhelmingly a British achievement: around the King’s ship milled a vast grey fleet flying the White Ensign; everyone knew that whatever kind of cock-up the British Army made of things, the Royal Navy would do its job with dignity and efficiency. It must be difficult for a later generation to realise the place the Navy then held in the pride and affection of the British people.

The book begins with the statutory references to round-ships, the Cinque Ports and the Battle of Sluis, and dutifully concludes with a chapter or two about NATO, the Falklands and all that; but it is in effect a grand memorial to a lost infatuation, which was really born with Nelson. The Nelsonic story itself, its dash and its sacrifice, its emotional comradeship, its romantic fallibility, for more than a century summed up the British people’s feeling about their Navy; and to many of those who served in it, too, the Navy was more than just an armed service, but a kind of passion – “a two-fisted, free-living, implacable, tragic, jovial, splendid service”. Admiral Lord Charles Beresford once wrote of it in a rare moment of lyricism.

The 14 eminent contributors to this book certainly do not let emotion run away with them. A professor at Cornell, the officer in charge of the Australian Navy’s tactical development cell, a distinguished naval architect, a hydrographer of the Navy, a chairman of the Society for Nautical Research, sundry academics and defence analysts, they are all pre-eminent in their various fields, but are not by and large tuggers at the heart-strings. Nor are they, of course, mere propagandists. There is no hiding the incompetence, paltry rivalries, foolish economic decisions,



Sea food: dinner in the mess deck of a light cruiser c.1914-1918. The tables were secured to the deckhead after use to provide space to sling hammocks

misjudgements and bigotries which have so often weakened the British Navy; but now that the story is really ended, there is no denying either the historical truth that all in all the Navy won. It battled through to the end, often losing a fight but seldom losing a war, and the British people were right to see in it an epitome of what was best and strongest about themselves.

Admiral Hill, the exemplary editor of the work, of course makes the point that naval history is not just ships, sailors and strategy. Economics, sociology and politics all got their due attention, and the illustrations include not only the usual portraits of admirals, prints of smoke-shrouded ancient victories and photographs of peculiar Victorian battleships, but also some

lovely paintings, reproduced in colour, to remind us that the Navy often played upon the sensibilities of artists, too. I don’t think there is much revisionist writing in the collection, and there is little of the creative fire that raged through Corelli Barnett’s recent history of the Navy in the Second World War; but there is steady judgement, able writing, and of course profound knowledge (though I may perhaps be forgiven the impertinence of pointing out that the Battle of the Taku Forts was not, as Andrew Lambert has it on page 182, “Jacky” Fisher’s baptism of fire...).

Mr Lambert, in an otherwise impeccable essay on the Navy and the Victorian Empire, says that the Taku battle was the Royal Navy’s only significant defeat in the 19th century. There were

plenty to come in the 20th, though. Humiliating reverses in the First World War, diverse shambles in the Second, demonstrated that the Royal Navy’s Nelsonic pre-eminence was lost already. Pathos was not among the qualities “Charlie” Beresford saw in his beloved Victorian Navy and it is distressing even now to read of the disadvantages under which, all too often through no fault of its own, the Navy struggled towards its end: rickety Swordfish biplanes lumbering heroically but generally vainly towards the enemy; poor old unconstructed *Hood*, up against the *Bismarck*; *Prince of Wales* with no air cover, out-gunned MTBs; *Dudley Pound*, with his fatal brain tumour already developing, scattering the convoy PQ17 to its fearful destruction.

But it won. In those days the British saw their Navy in the context of a long and mighty tradition – the most famous exemplar of a great nation with an epic history. Who sees the Royal Navy in those terms now? Foreign Anglophiles perhaps, but very few Britons. Only those of more than a certain age will still get a thrill of pride from this handsome book: just as only a few elderly romantics, pausing to contemplate the roster of names on the naval war memorial on Plymouth Hoe, the majestic titles of the fleets once dispersed across the oceans, the terrible battle-honours, the long, long register of men lost at sea in so many distant half-forgotten actions – only a few of us still have to wipe away a tear.

## Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



**Blood on the Tracks** by Miles Bredin (Picador, £6.99).

A young reporter’s gung-ho, rather shapeless account of an intermittent rail journey between Angola and Mozambique in 1992. With less than half the 2,760-mile line operational, he doesn’t board a train until page 129. After a terrifying brush with the Angolan civil war, Bredin is graphic on Africa’s endemic corruption, inflation and decay. Some may find his puppyish enthusiasm tiresome.



**The Literary Companion to Cats** ed. Clare Boylan (Sinclair-Stevenson, £9.99)

Clare Boylan isn’t sentimental. Once, finding a note from the cleaner – “Cat is in the bin” – she promptly interred the creature, along with a fluffy bag of Hoover empties, in the garden. A wonderfully skittish collection of feline literature, including Barbara Pym on cat fleas, Dora Carrington on cat lust and Boylan’s personal favourite – Francis Searle’s poem “Old Cat”.



**De Valera** by Tim Pat Coogan (Arrow, £9.99)

Chatty and outspoken, Coogan has conjured a lively read from the distant figure who dominated Ireland for much of this century. Though De Valera was vilified in Britain for insisting on Irish neutrality, Coogan notes that he was shackled by the IRA during the war. In the post-war world, “Dev” emerges as economically inept and a cultural isolationist. Coogan’s verdict: “He did little useful and much harmful.”



**Harvest** by Celia Brayfield (Viking, £9.99)

Jane Knight, author of bestselling cookery books, has arranged a birthday party for her husband at their Gascon farmhouse. Among the guests are her husband’s ex-lover (the beautiful but infertile Grace), his daughter (the beautiful, but pregnant Imogen) and Grace’s husband Nick (specialist in HIV-positive babies). A fragrant blockbuster which, the author darkly hints, has been inspired by “true-life” events.



**The Book of Sodom** by Paul Hallam (Verso, £10.95)

There’s no shortage of literature about the “city of the plain” (whence our swear-word “sod”). Hallam’s quirky anthology ranges from Proust to porn. His introduction – part autobiography, part history of gay London – could happily be expanded to book length. The cover-pic of a naked man having a fag lit for him was taken in that gay bastion – the Newcastle United changing-room in 1938.



**Brando** by Peter Manson (Orion, £8.99)

A big book about a big man, Peter Manson subpoena-ed over 700 witnesses for his biography of Marlon Brando, all willing to testify to the star’s prodigious appetite for women and self-loathing. Most interesting are Manson’s takes on Brando’s goings-on in Tahiti which eventually led to the murder of Brando’s daughter’s fiancée by Brando’s son. A sad account of a vastly talented man.

## The old school polymath

All-rounders like Walter Oakeshott aren’t allowed in today’s world. By Godfrey Hodgson

If you go into the British Museum and turn right, you will find the room in which the museum keeps its most precious manuscript treasures. Two of the oldest of these were discovered by one man, and he was not a professional scholar, but a schoolmaster.

One is the original manuscript of Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*, which Walter Oakeshott recognised in the library at Winchester College when he was teaching there. The other is a notebook which he himself bought before he realised it contained the notes Sir Walter Raleigh made for his *History of the World* while awaiting execution in the Tower of London.

Those two great discoveries, though, were only incidental to Oakeshott’s life. He was an all-rounder of a kind that is simply not allowed in today’s world: in a career of dazzling versatility, he led a more than double life. Starting with a double First in Classics from Balliol College, Oxford, he earned his living teaching in public schools and universities, ending his career as Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. But at one time or another he also tried his hand at journalism, economics, sociology, and art history.

Oakeshott’s first book was an economic history of trade. Renaissance maps were a hobby, and he discovered the one used by the Elizabethan explorer Anthony Jenkinson when he tried to travel from Russia to China. He edited Raleigh’s love poems to Queen Elizabeth. His interests extended to modern architecture, and as Vice-Chancellor at Oxford he supported the new school of engineering as well as helping to set up

Walter Oakeshott

by John Dancy

Michael Russell, £24

the reforming Franks committee. His greatest scholarly work, though, was the study and editing of the two great 12th-century illuminated bibles in the library of Winchester cathedral. By analysing the way they drew details such as hair, leaves or drapery, he identified individual artists like “the Master of the Leaping Figures” and “the Master of the Gothic Majesty”.

He was no cloistered aesthete, however. In the late Thirties he wrote a ground-breaking report, *Men Without Work*, on long-term unemployment, a subject which is still sadly relevant today. It contributed to the Beveridge Report, and so to the intellectual foundations of the Welfare State.

Painfully shy, with indifferent health and afflicted by recurrent depression reminiscent of Winston Churchill’s “black dog”, Oakeshott was no robust. In 1953, while headmaster of Winchester, his career, and his emotional life, suffered two terrible blows which almost broke him. The son of a master hanged himself in the chapel and Oakeshott was with the father when he found the boy’s body. Shortly afterwards, he seriously mishandled a minor scandal when he tried to persuade a tough, military housemaster who had exceeded his authority to resign.

Yet this gentle, owl-like man with his

wide-brimmed hats and self-effacing drawl, who could seem almost too good for this world, continued to work furiously into his eighties, and as Vice-Chancellor at Oxford showed a surprising toughness and realism in his efforts to propel that stubborn institution into the modern world. “It must have been very like this”, he said one night at Lincoln’s high table after a dinner for which both butler and chef had excelled themselves, “at Fountains just before the dissolution of the monasteries”.

John Dancy calls Oakeshott a late product of “Balliolism”. The Balliol ethos, nourished by Victorian worthies such as T.H. Green and Benjamin Jowett, was perhaps the product of non-conformist morality shifted into a cult of work and service. A generation which had lost its religious faith kept a quasi-religious belief in the lay trinity of Beauty, Truth and Goodness. That cult bred an ethos of service, but also high spiritual ambition. The idea was that men should go from Balliol to serve Church and State, but in that service should continue to pursue their own personal cultivation – and their salvation.

It is less than 10 years since Walter Oakeshott died. Yet in the world of Newt Gingrich and Rupert Murdoch the Balliolism of his generation seems as edict as that of Fountains Abbey before Henry VIII started hanging abbots at their own gates. His scholarship can be patronized as amateur, his dedication to excellence can be attacked as elitism. Yet there remains something admirable and precious about a man who could set himself such high standards.

## Who’s reading whom?

J.G. Ballard’s first volume of collected non-fiction, *A User’s Guide to the Millennium*, will be published by HarperCollins in January

When Albert Camus died in a car crash in 1960, the manuscript of his last novel *The First Man* (Hamilish Hamilton) was found in the wreckage. It is perhaps two thirds of what Camus intended – enough to publish – but as his daughter points out in the introduction, its colonialist subject matter and the fact that Camus was under attack from the extreme left-wing of the French intelligentsia, convinced his widow it was untimely to release it. We

are lucky to have it now. It is the most brilliant semi-autobiographical account of an Algerian childhood amongst the grinding poverty and stoicism of poor French-Algerian colonials. Camus’s notes and revisions appear as an appendix and the evolution of the book is clearly visible. His ability to conjure landscape and atmosphere in long, long sentences of exact description without resorting to simile or metaphor is extraordinary.





# gardening



The end of the year: a time to take stock in the garden  
Photograph: Andrew Lawson

## We'll take a cup of compost yet...

Anna Pavord reviews the past year's triumphs and failings in the garden and makes plans for next year's new growth

There is a terrible compulsion at the end of the year to take stock of things: to start counting jars of chutney in the larder, pillowcases in the airing cupboard, leaks in the roof. It is a process that includes the garden. As the counting of the little triumphs and the rather more memorable disasters proceeds, you have to keep your fingers crossed that you are going to come out in credit. I think I might just have broken even if it hadn't been for the wall.

The kitchen garden is bounded by stone walls about 18 inches thick and eight or nine feet high. In a foul weekend of westerly gales, storms and hail a 30-foot section of the west wall came crashing down on the border, crushing the fan-trained pears that had been spreadeagled against it. I mind the pears more than the wall. When everything else in the garden threatened to gallop away out of control, I used to go and look at the pears,

symbols of order lined out textbook fashion against their long bamboo canes.

The old mason who has kept our place more or less stuck together since we have been here has died, so strange builders have been coming to look at the wall. There has been much sucking of teeth. "What you want there is a nice bit of breeze-block," said the first. The second talked about using his hand saw to cut up all the big stones. "Give them a nice flat face. Make them easier to handle. You'll have a nice lot of stone left over." He wanted the spare stone to do a repair job in the neighbouring village. The third one talked encouragingly about lime mortar, which is what Paddy, our old mason, used to use, but his finger seemed to have slipped writing the quote. It was enough to build a granny annexe, let alone a garden wall.

So, the gaping hole is still there and, unfortunately, there is no way I can avoid seeing it as I

go down to pull leeks and collect Brussels sprouts.

It was one of the best years ever for crops. The freezer, bulging with tomatoes, bears testimony to that. The star of the five different outdoor varieties I grew was "Dario" (Marshalls, £1.77). Having grown smallish tomatoes such as "Red Alert" and "Tornado" for some time, it was a treat to have these big, round fruits, each at least a quarter of a pound in weight.

Marshalls talk of it as a bush tomato, but because of our slug problem, I grew some of the "Dario" plants up canes, pinching out side shoots, and they still cropped well. As frosts came so late, we were still picking them at the end of November. "St Pierre" (Marshalls 99p) looks similar - one to try this year.

You can sow any time during March and April. If you are growing outside, though, you can't put out plants until the end of May, so there is no benefit in sowing too early. Sowing around

the end of March works for me in the south, but mid-April may be wiser in the north. I sow seed in a five inch pot, water it, cover it with clingfilm and leave it on the kitchen window sill to germinate.

When the seedlings are established, prick them out into three inch pots, one plant to a pot, and grow them on in these until it is time to transplant them outside. Timing that last shift is the only tricky thing about growing tomatoes. You want them hardened off and planted out as soon as you can, so that cropping will start early. The earliest date I have picked outdoor tomatoes is 4 July. That was the bush variety "Tumbler". Cold nights in late spring, though, will turn leaves blue and check growth.

The most dramatic happening of the year was the invitation to a neighbour's house in early summer to watch the opening of the buds on her night-flowering cactus, *Epiphyllum cypripedium*. The plant itself is an untidy looking

thing, standing about five feet high in a pot, with stems flattened out to look like leaves. It is a cactus, but one that likes wet rather than dry. Its native habitat is Central America, where it is an epiphyte, scrambling around in tropical forests.

The buds hang down on long fleshy stems from the flattened leaf-stems. The outside is stained pink, and fleshy bud scales make each one look like some tropical insect rather than a flower. Round about eight o'clock at night, the buds begin to stir and the whole process of them opening is like watching a speeded up nature film. You can hear the petals cracking out from the tightly folded bud parcels. The flower opens a pure, mesmerising white with a complicated centre of creamy stamens and a predatory looking stigma.

The flower, fully-opened (it looks good after half an hour, but is not fully shaken out for about an hour) is at least six inches across, a mass of thin spidery

outer petals which widen as they approach the centre of the bloom. It is outrageously wanton and smells so sweet, you could get drunk on that alone. The smell is there for whatever moth pollinates it in its Central American home. By morning, the flower has crumpled and hangs like a wet dishcloth. With luck another will take its place.

Now, if this were an ordinary garden plant, you would be asking yourself, "Why keep a bundle of scraggy stems for 51 weeks of the year in order to get flowers for the remaining one?" And you would be right. But this is such an extraordinary spectacle, reason goes out of the window.

From my neighbour I got a leaf cutting which, having rooted, is now growing strongly with nine fresh stem-leaves growing from it. The fronds are much the size and shape of our native hart's tongue fern. Epiphyllums need to be in a place where the winter temperature does not drop below 5C. Being epiphytes, they do not

need full sun. An east or west facing window would suit them. Mine is in a six inch pot (though it might well move to a bigger one in spring) and gets occasional liquid feeds during spring and summer. In winter it likes a dryish rest, though should not be allowed to dry out completely.

My neighbour propagates from side shoots. You need to leave these to dry off at the bottom for a day or two before you pot up the cutting in compost.

Gardeners, though, tend to look forward rather than back. The sight of "Soleil d'Or" narcissus buds already six inches high in the rough grass is very cheering. So are the great curtains of yellow jasmine catching in the postman's hair at the back door. He's new on the round and hasn't learned yet to make the slight bob and swerve to avoid it. "You could cut it back," said my husband when the jasmine took my hat off on a dark night. Now there's a radical thought with which to start off the New Year.

## Going back to their roots

Houseplants feel homesick, too. By Paul Simons

Sitting on millions of windowsills are homesick creatures craving for love and attention. They are houseplants, and the reason why their leaves turn brown, flowers shrivel, and stems wither is because we don't understand their ecology. The key to growing many houseplants is to appreciate the life of their great grandparents in the wild, where they are often superbly adapted to tough environments.

Centrally heated homes are so dry that to most plants they feel like a desert. That's fine for cacti and succulents, but be warned that these plants are also used to strong sunlight, so in our insipid winter sunshine they go into a sort of plant version of hibernation during which they should be left unwatered.

But for houseplants from damp tropical rainforests, the dry indoor air is a big headache. Begonias, fittonias, marantas and calceolarias are among plants adapted to humid air, and the African

violet actually drinks moisture from the air through the fine hairs carpeting its leaves - in its native home in Tanzania it's fed by mists rolling off the Indian Ocean. There are ways of providing extra humidity: standing the pots on wet stone, putting saucers of water under the leaves, misting leaves, standing groups of plants together so they keep each other moist, or putting them in kitchens and bathrooms, which are usually the most humid rooms.

Forest floor plants are also superbly adapted to scavenging for light in a dark environment. Begonias even have miniature spectacles peppered across their leaves to help focus beams of light down inside, and the crimson undersides of their leaves act like the silver backing on mirrors, reflecting back any light into the leaf. So these plants appreciate being well away from sunny windowsills where they'll fry to death.

Sometimes you need to understand plant behaviour.

If your Indian rubber plant sheds its leaves it's often because it hasn't been watered, so the plant thinks it's the start of a full-blown Indian drought and time to drop its leaves to seal up any water leaks. But after a good watering it seems like the monsoon season has arrived, so the plant puts on a big spurt of growth.

In fact, watering houseplants can be a minefield - too much and you can give your little darlings the plant equivalent of a heart attack too little and they wilt. But one plant is impossible to overwater - the umbrella plant. A cousin of papyrus, used to growing in swamps and riverbanks, it is extremely happy standing in a jar of water with a bit of soil at the bottom.

If you've got a real knack for throttling houseplants, it's worth considering some really tough characters. The Kentia palm comes from the Lord Howe Islands in the South Pacific, where it's battered by salty winds and shrouded in



Some like it damp: begonias come from humid climes and have an aversion to central heating

deep shade from neighbouring trees. This makes it a masochistic houseplant, tolerating draughts, lack of water, overwatering and near darkness. Other plants can put up with intense sun, heat and dryness and even the inferno of a nearby radiator: the succulent crown of thorns from the arid lands of Madagascar and mother-in-law's tongue from the dry east of South Africa, for example. And the weird air-plants from the tree-tops of Central America are so tough they can be left dangling in mid-air without soil and only a light misting every now and again.

Your home is full of interesting ecological niches. For instance, don't be afraid of using cold, draughty windowsills at this time of year because to a flowering bulb plant they feel like bliss - a reminder of the mountains of Turkey where most of them originally come from, and where they flower in the bitter cold of early spring. This is why cyclamens, hyacinths, miniature daffodils and snowdrops shrivel up in warm rooms: they think it's summer and time to die back into their bulbs or corms for the summer drought.

Sad to say, many of these

plants might be thriving indoors, but out in the wild their relatives are suffering a wretched life. Many tons of wild flowering bulbs are being dug up in Turkey for the European horticulture trade, and it's worth asking whether the bulbs you buy are picked from the wild or artificially propagated. Other plants are suffering from greedy plant collectors and the loss of their homes - some of those big cacti and cycads you see in office atriums were originally stripped out illegally from Mexico and Africa. Maybe one of the cruellest ironies is that the African violet is now one of the world's most popular houseplants, but in Tanzania it's only got one inchhold left in the forests of the Usambara hills.



Mr Peck himself grew sunflowers in his onion beds, not for the decorative effect, but because they will indicate when the onions need watering

Positively the last word on companion planting... A newspaper cutting was sent in by D T Holm of Colchester who thinks it came from the Essex County Standard in the early 1980s. The columnist is a commercial grower, Stanley Peck, who had been asked for advice on companion planting. "Living plants," he writes "are affected by aromas, exudations from leaves and especially roots of other plants, and also by soil micro-organisms. Thus heathers transplanted in erica soil are assisted by living organisms which help them take, yet any frame lettuce plant infilled amongst growing crops never makes up."

Suffolk growers, he points out, find that broad beans intercropped between potatoes produce heavily and if rows of earthen up potatoes are spaced widely enough, brassicas do well between the rows. Mr Peck also draws on German research which indicates that cabbage grown

close to celery is less likely to be affected by hostile micro-organisms in the soil. Celery, dwarf beans and cabbage all live together happily but cabbages and strawberries fight, as do all brassicas and runner beans.

The Dutch traditionally grow leeks and onions with carrots, but members of the allium family do not do well with broad beans, peas, or runner beans. Mr Peck himself grew sunflowers in his onion beds, not for the decorative effect, but because they will indicate when the onions need watering.

Underneath cloches, lettuce, peas and carrots grow together, but tomatoes and early potatoes, despite being members of the same family do not like being near each other. Nothing flourishes under walnuts or sycamores, but ground where brambles have been burnt or where nettles grew always produce good crops. Nettles contain iron and potash; brambles are rich in magnesium.

This article is based on a six-part television series, "Potted Histories", on BBC2, 9.50-10pm, starting 4 January, with an accompanying book (BBC, £9.99).



# Have you got a licence for that leek?

You may have missed some of the year's best rural stories. Here we round them up, and add a red herring of our own. By William Hartston

Everyday tales of countryfolk do not always make it to the pages of the national press, so here is a round-up of some you may have missed. In the spirit of seasonal mendacity, we have also included one tale entirely of our own invention. See if you can shoot down the decoy in this game and win a prize. Details of how to enter the competition are given at the end of the news items.

## Boycott and batter BA

Leeds University has become the first in the country to offer a BA degree course in Yorkshire. The six-year, part-time course includes items related to whippets, cricket and Yorkshire puddings. According to the course head, Dr Tony Donagrodski, "It involves a lot of hard work [graff], dealing with the social, economic and cultural history of Yorkshire."

## Weeds for soccer

A company on the Orkney island of Flotta is cultivating seaweed to sell to soccer teams. The test centre at Orkney Water has spent more than 20 years developing agricultural and horticultural uses for seaweed, but this is their first venture into football. The new product is an extract of brown kelp which is expected to act as a growth stimulant on pitches.

## The joy of cubes

Some time before the recent dispute over genetically engineered tomatoes, Leo Wilson, a tomato-growing gypsy from Scarborough, announced his own success at improving the traditional design without the use of genetics. After years of experimentation, he has developed a tomato with a square cross-section. "I grew a square tomato," he said, "because with six sides it is easier to slice."

## Uncooperative bank

The Ferret Welfare Society has been refused a bank account on the grounds that ferrets may be used to hunt rabbits. A spokesman for the Co-op bank said that they will not support any organisation involved in blood sports. An official of the society, however, said it was "a completely barmy decision" because its main activity is in raising money to pay vets' bills and support abandoned animals.

## Victory for goats

A court in Taunton issued an injunction against a group of morris dancers after a farmer claimed they were upsetting his goats. When the morrismen danced each Sunday lunchtime in the carpark of a local pub, the goats showed "clear signs of distress" according to the farmer, who also produced figures showing that their milk yield was significantly lower on the days following morris dancing. "It's a ridiculous decision,"

a spokesman for the dancers protested. "We have as much right to be there as the goats."

## Birds strike back

A bird-scaring plan in a north Yorkshire village backfired badly. Villagers rigged up a loudspeaker to play a recording of a bird in distress in the belief that it would frighten other birds away. Instead they soon found themselves besieged by a screaming black cloud of birds who had gathered to investigate the source of the noise. As the birds swooped down, councillors and tourists dived for cover. "It was straight out of Hitchcock's *The Birds*," said the parish clerk.

## Render unto Caesar

A sheep has been knitted a sweater out of its own wool. Cecile Telle, a fine art and tapestry student at the Royal College of Art, made the sweater, which has four leg holes and short sleeves, from freshly sheared, unbleached wool. "It's a simple matter of taking something from the sheep and then giving it back," she explained; "an interaction with nature."

## Canine cleanliness

An entrepreneurial couple, Greg Booth and Joanna Hibberd of Wheatfield, Oxfordshire, have imported an idea from Australia to offer a new service to Britain's dog owners. They have bought an old British Telecom van and installed a hydrobath in it to create Britain's first mobile dog bath business. The cost of having your dog washed is £7.50 a time and the company is called Dee-O-Gees. "We're sure we are on to a winner," they said.

## Silly moos

Cambridge Council came up with an original solution to a problem caused by thin cattle. Its herd of Friesian cross cattle grazing on Midsummer Common, were creating difficulties by straying through the barriers that were supposed to keep them on the field. The council had tried narrowing the barriers, but ran into objections from townfolk who were then unable to get their bicycles and prams through. The council resolved the problem by reverting to the original barriers and replacing all the cattle with fatter animals.

## Like rabbits

Sussex police were spared the effort of responding to a burglar alarm, when the shop owner rang them to explain that it had been triggered by "sexually over-active rabbits".

## Fish catches man

A giant eel nearly caught a fisherman in Loch Long in Scotland. Cameron Bell, a diving instructor, went hunting in the Loch with three of his

students, hoping to catch a 6ft-long conger eel. The prey, however, lunged and caught him in a tangle of fishing line. Mr Bell was dragged by the eel at high speed, 60ft under water. Ten hours later, he was found lying by a road near the loch. He had escaped from the eel by cutting the line with a knife, but does not recall coming back to the surface.

## Weevil dating

A pub in St Albans is claiming to be Britain's oldest inn after the discovery of two weevils in an ancient malting oven. Found during an archaeological dig, the miles have been identified as *Tarantostichus stussineri*, which come from the Carpathians and eastern Alps. According to a spokesman for the local museum, they must have come over with the Romans, which tentatively dates the pub back to between 60 and 250AD.

## Owl alert

A woman in Long Eaton, Notts, noticed an eagle owl sitting 80ft up on an electricity pylon near her home. Seeing the bird remain motionless for some time, she became concerned for its state of health and telephoned an animal rescue group. When a rescuer arrived some time later, the bird was still there, so he climbed the pylon to see if he could help it. He descended soon after, to report that it was a dummy, put on the wire by engineers to scare off starlings.

## Dangerous vegetable

A man was charged with attempted robbery after allegedly brandishing a leek at an NCP car park office in Swansea. He was reported to have entered the office and threatened staff with what appeared to be a gun. No money was handed over and a Carmarthen man with a leek in a Tesco bag was later taken into custody.

## Raging bull tamed

Police marksmen were called in to Ashford market, Kent, after a half-ton bullock named Fred escaped by leaping a six-foot fence. He caused havoc, running half a mile across town, but was finally pacified not by police tranquillisers but by a more basic device brought in by the market manager: Daisy the cow. When the secret weapon was produced Fred became quite docile and was led back to safety.

If you think you have spotted the fictional item in the above, simply write its headline on a postcard and send it, with your name and address to: Rural Cowpat, The Independent Weekend, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. The first correct answer out of a hat will win a bottle of champagne.



Our fields turned brown as biscuits, and the sheer, sustained heat gave a sense of impending doom. Was the life to be burnt out of everything?

How short is our meteorological memory! As I stoke up the wood-burning stove, it seems inconceivable that for day after day in the summer I went for walks in nothing but swimming trunks and trainers, and still poured with sweat.

Did we really spend hours laboriously watering flowers and vegetables to keep them alive? Were the grass fields really so burnt that they became as bleached as the stubbles? Did the beech trees really look as though they were about to throw up their branches and die? Yes – all these things happened.

The summer of '95 will go down in history as a scorcher, and even if many details have already faded, some will remain etched in my memory. In June the smell of hay hung over the fields so thick that you felt you could cut down chunks and eat them; but already there was a sense of menace in the air, for the sun was so hot, and the ground so dry, that it seemed impossible the short grass would ever shoot again. With growth at a standstill, the price of hay went mad, rising to three times its normal level as farmers began to stockpile. For weeks their alarm appeared justified: there was no second growth



DUFF  
HART-DAVIS

of grass, no second cut of hay or silage. So short did fodder become that some people began feeding precious hay to cattle before July was out. In our area we were lucky. Occasional thunderstorms kept pastures green for longer than elsewhere – and never will I forget the lightning bolt which shattered a tree in our steep churchyard. I described in an earlier column how I was out walking when the deluge began, and how I saw the strike go in. So huge was the stricken cedar that the cost of felling it, cutting it up and restoring the damage came to more than £1,500.

In the end even our own fields

turned brown as biscuits, and the sheer, sustained heat created a sense of impending doom. Was the life to be burnt out of everything?

In August a stay on the Cornish coast only increased my apprehension. The sea was so delicious that we swam before breakfast, lunch and supper, but the beaches were packed solid, and the atmosphere was so hot and thick that one could scarcely breathe. Later that month, as I passed through Birmingham airport on the way to Scotland, an electronic thermometer outside the terminal was hovering between 96 and 97°F.

"In the end," we kept telling ourselves, "it must rain properly" – and in the end it did. Unfortunately we were not at home to witness the ensuing miracle, but everyone who saw it said that it was incredibly swift. One day the fields were brown: the next they had gone green again. Incredible secondary growth followed. Somehow plants and earth had stored up their energy through the barren months, and now they let it go in a late orgy. The trees did the same: having looked as though they were on the point of extinction, they surged back to life and held on to their leaves far past the usual term.

And so, after good autumn rains,

we congratulated nature on its amazing ability to restore a balance. A trip through Tipperary seemed to confirm our optimism. "A grand soft day, is it not!" exclaimed everyone we met, as mist swept over the sodden landscape, and the drifting tang of peat-smoke filled the sky with melancholy. There at least nothing had changed.

Back home, however, I read yet another official report which says that global warming is not myth but reality. Had the great heat of '95 been a harbinger of things to come?

The reason people hope for, and bet on, a white Christmas, is surely that, deep down, they long for a traditional end to the year. They hanker after the kind of crunching cold recorded by the Rev. Francis Kilvert, who described in his diary how, at midnight on New Year's Eve, 1871, he went outside and listened to church bells ringing faintly "across the snow".

The fact that we have had a dose of cold weather this time is certainly reassuring. Seasonal snow gives the feeling that our climate may not, after all, be changing drastically, and that Santa will have something for his runners to glide over for a few winters yet.

We lay 5,000 yards of hedge each winter, thanks to all those bureaucrats

We start work at daybreak and carry on till dark, making the most of the light. Hedge-laying is a winter job – you have to do it when the sap is down or you damage the trees. The season starts when the leaves come off – say October – and we keep going till they come out again in May. Now they're telling us we have to knock off by March because of nesting birds.

"Most days we're working by half-eight. We'll stop a couple of times – say for 15 minutes at 10.30 – for some bait [a snack]. Then back to work with another quick break – maybe 20 minutes – for dinner. With days so short you can't stop for longer. Of course, we have to sharpen the saws and billhooks, too – especially if there's a lot of stones in the ditches. Sometimes we can go on all day without bothering, it just depends on the edge.

"We work as a team of two or three and hope to do 50 to 70 yards a day, lopping off the outside branches and half-cutting through the trunks – far enough to topple them over to lie in a three-foot wall – you always leave enough bark to let them grow on. mind! Then we go back, putting stakes in to hold the hedge steady



COUNTRY LIVES

Daniel Butler talks to  
Geoff Rhys, hedge  
layer in Radnorshire

and what we call "heatherings" – 15-20 foot stakes which you interweave along the top to make sure the thing doesn't come up with the wind.

"I once worked in a factory and hated it. The money was good, but the boredom was terrible. I love this job because it's out in the fresh air and we're always on the move.

"Wood is another perk. A lot of farms now have oil-fired heating and don't want it. By taking it away, we're doing them a favour. I sell it as firewood locally.

I get £50 for a two-ton load.

There's a downside of course – the weather. The season's so short you've got to put up with whatever it throws at you. Mind you, we stop if it's really wet or if there's heavy snow around the ditches – for safety, really. If you slip over with a chainsaw your leg's gone and if your gloves get wet the billhook can slip and you've lost a foot.

"We charge £2-£2.50 a yard, depending on how far gone the hedge is and the size of the job. Then there's the fencing on top; see, the main thing with a newly-laid hedge is it's got to be protected from stock with a fence on both sides: that's another £1.70.

"There aren't that many of us doing it now around here – certainly not the younger guys like me. It's a dying art. I had two or three weeks' training at college, but to learn it properly you've just got to do it.

"Mind you, there's lots of work, thanks to the grants. Farmers are using these to the full, and we do 5,000 yards each winter – thanks to all those bureaucrats in London and Brussels. But it's a pity the same people are paying the farmers to overstock – sheep are a hedge's worst enemy."



## travel

# What to explore, where to celebrate,

A month-by-month travel calendar for the coming year. By Martin Scudamore

## Climb...

... to 60,000ft for the 20th anniversary of the first commercial flight of Concorde on 21 January. You won't be able to replicate the maiden journey from Heathrow to Bahrain, but a return to New York is available at £4,633 through British Airways (0345-222111). If you can't afford the fare, it's only £6 to climb the steps to one of the prototype Concorde at the Imperial War Museum's branch at Duxford near Cambridge (01223 835000).

... aboard the vessels at the **London Boat Show** at Earls Court, which takes place from 5 to 14 January and boasts more than 650 exhibitors and 800 craft, as well as more marine equipment and accessories than you could shake a snorkel at. There will be waterskiing and windsurfing displays; you can try dinghy sailing (free for children), canoeing, rowing and steering radio-controlled models, sail-hoisting and simulations of powerboats. Ticket Hotline: 01753-890187. If you climb aboard a bus or tube to get there after 7 January, you may be dismayed to find London Transport fares increased by up to 10 per cent. A one-stop journey in the central area will cost £1.10. London Underground is planning to steal an idea from the Paris Métro and introduce carnets of 10 tickets (price £10), but problems with machinery mean this may not happen until spring.

... the **Tour Eiffel** or the **Grande Arche de la Defense** on a day-trip to Paris. From 8 January, the earliest Eurostar arrival at the Gare du Nord from London Waterloo is 10.23am. The same service stops at the new Ashford International station, and offers the most expensive rail journey in the world: a standard fare of £56.50 for the 37-minute trip to Calais, costing well over £1 per mile.

... towards the top of the map of Britain. **Robert Burns** should be the subject of many a New Year's toast in Scotland tomorrow night as 1996 is the 200th anniversary of the poet's death. The celebrations will be getting into gear for Burns Night on 29 January. His home ground around Ayr is now accessible from Essex on the Ryanair service (0171-435 7101) from Stansted to Prestwick.

## Celebrate...

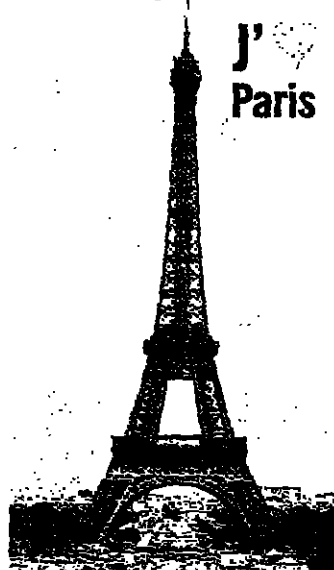
... the end of **Ramadan**, the Islamic month of fasting by day. You could take a holiday as far east as Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim country. Take a train ride through Java, stopping to explore Yogyakarta (complete with Sultan's palace) and to climb the smoking volcano Mount Bromo just beyond Surabaya in the east. Get there with an enticing new ticket innovation: British Airways Navigator fares, which give you maximum flexibility on round-the-world itineraries, both in terms of destinations and airlines. BA is selling these tickets only through specialist opera-

tors such as Trailfinders (0171-937 5400) and Bridge the World (0171-911 0900).

... the **Chinese New Year**. At midnight on 19 February, the boar relinquishes control of the heavens to a rat. Prominent "rattarians" include Shakespeare, Mozart and Marlon Brando. Virgin Holidays (01293 617181) organises short breaks to both Hong Kong and San Francisco: westbound, three days for £399; eastbound, £629 for five nights.

... the fact that the Foreign Office says it's now safe to go to the **Gambia**, try learning the drums there. Drumbeats Africa (01392 427564) organises drumming workshops for all levels in Brikama, Gambia.

## Paris



... the **Leicester Comedy Festival** from 9 to 18 February. The biggest variety of comedy events ever to take place under one umbrella: more than 70 events at 30 venues in 10 days including dance, theatre, visual arts, cartooning, street entertainment, children's events and stand-up. Performers include Felix Dexter, Jenny Eclair, festival patron Sean Hughes, Julian Clary and Little and Large. Premium rate festival hotline: 0891-100702.

... our Viking connections at the **Jorvik Festival** in York, 10-17 February. It's based on the original Vikings' Jolablot - the festive antidote to winter in the Northern lands. The Viking Longships Regatta, the Working Crafts Gallery and the Warriors' Combat are mere appetisers for the Torchlit Procession, Boat Burning and Fireworks Finale. Most of these are free. Information Hotline: 01904 643212.

## Play...

... with the bricks at the **new Legoland**, opening this month in Windsor. This is one place where you shouldn't end up searching fruitlessly under the sofa for the missing piece to finish your model. There are millions of bricks on the 150-acre site, along with theatres, rides and "playscapes", set in woods and parkland in sight of Windsor Castle. You can learn to drive a car or a boat, hunt for pirate treasure in the tree-tops or design a building that can withstand an earthquake. Oh, and if you can't find someone to look after the kids, just bring them along - they'll probably enjoy it as well. Information: 0990 626375.

## Explore...

... the legend of **Dr Livingstone**. I presume. All this month, and through to 7 July, London's National Portrait Gallery (0171-306 0055) is staging an exhibition entitled *David Livingstone and the Victorian Encounter with Africa*. The doctor's home in the Clyde Valley near Glasgow is open daily for exploration (01698 823140).

... Culloden for the 250th anniversary of the last land battle on mainland Britain. From the anniversary on 16 April onwards, visitors to the National Trust for Scotland Visitor Centre at Culloden, near Inverness, can see an exhibition called *The Swords and the Sorrows*. For the first time since the battle in 1746, many of the items used will be returned to their original site of use. Pistols, swords and personal effects, as well as portraits of many of the characters in the last Jacobite rebellion will be on display at the Centre. Information: 01463 790607.

... England's highest (and lowest) tourist attraction. The new **Park Level Visitor Mine** at Kilhope Lead Mining

Centre opens on 1 April, allowing visitors to experience the working conditions of the Victorian lead miner. The Mining Centre is open daily from April to October, and on Sundays in November. Information: 01388 537505.

... the streets of **Rome**, which are gaining more and more traffic-free areas, and experience the traditional Easter Sunday blessing in St Peter's Square. Italian State Tourist Office: 0171-408 1254.

... the streets of **London**, many of which will also be traffic-free (for the day only) for the **London Marathon** on 21 April. Runners and watchers should call 0171-620 4117.

## Sail...

... from the new cruise terminal at **Dover Docks**, which aims to compensate for the likely reduction in ferry traffic lost to the Channel Tunnel. These days, you can get considerably further than Calais. Consider dancing aboard the **Boleyn** on its British Isles and Norway cruise starting on 25 May. The itinerary goes from Dover by way of Beachy Head to Scilly, Dublin, Greenock, Norway, Shetland, Leith and Harwich; a part-trip, up to Greenock in three nights, costs £275. Return rail travel from any British Rail station in mainland UK is included in the price. Page and Moy Holidays: 0116-252 4411.

... out without having to come home when it gets dark. Britain's biggest tourist attraction, **Alton Towers**, opens a wacky new hotel this month. Its most startling feature will be the giant "flying machine" - part hot-air balloon, part pirate ship and part lunar module, apparently designed in committee by Leonardo da Vinci, HG Wells and Heath Robinson - which greets guests as they enter the 37ft-high atrium. There's even a suite for chocoholics and another for fizzy-drinkoholics where you can gorge to grossness. Enquiries: 0990 204060.

... rugby at the **International Seven-a-side Competition in Hong Kong** (if selected; otherwise, you may have to be content to watch). Numerous companies offer inclusive breaks in the Territory, such as Kuoni (0171-499 8636) and Cathay Pacific (0171-747 8888).

... the dumb tourist in two new ex-Soviet destinations served from this month by British Airways: (0345 222111) Kiev in Ukraine and Almaty in Kazakhstan.

... around in Denmark, the home of Lego. **Copenhagen's** reign as European Capital of Culture gets into gear. Danish Tourist Board: 0171-259 5958.

... the tables at **Vegas** after watching the **Bruno-Tyson** fight. **Airtours** (01706-260000) is running charters from Manchester, Luton and Gatwick.

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... under the new **Severn Bridge** (it's a slight detour, but worth it) and up the Avon to the International Festival of the Sea, in Bristol Harbour from 24 to 27 May. This will be the largest maritime event ever staged in Britain, with 700 traditional and classic vessels from throughout the seafaring world.

... your yacht into **Cannes** for the **Film Festival** (don't forget the shades). ... the canals of **Venice** along with hundreds of boats for **Vogalonga**, the annual pageant of La Sessa (Ascension Day) when Venice's marriage to the sea is commemorated. **Magic of Italy** (0181-748 7575) can fix the trip for you, while its accommodation-only offshoot

Italian Escapades (0181-748 2661) can help you find a room near the Bridge of Sighs.

## Walk...

... the **Empire Way** to **Wembley Stadium** for the kick-off in the **European Soccer Championships**, at 3pm on 8 June. England (who take on Switzerland in the opening match) and Scotland are among the contenders. Well, it's not the winning, it's the taking part.

... to the wicket to face **India's** bowlers at **Edgbaston** for the **First Test**, 6 to 10 June.

... up the 199 steps to the ruined but still awe-inspiring **Whitby Abbey**, perched on the cliff-top above the harbour, for the **Whitby Festival** (8 to 23 June). Without local hero **Captain Cook**, born here in 1729, we might never have had to face the Aussies at cricket. **Whitby** also has associations with **Count Dracula**, and for those who like a chilling tale along with their walk, **Harry Collett** becomes "The Man in Black" to scare visitors nightly with macabre stories, including that of the "Barguest", an infernal black hound whose baying howl foretells the death of anyone unfortunate enough to hear it. **Ghost Walks** or **Heritage Walks**: 01947 602138; **Whitby Festival** details: 01947 604855 or 602674.

... or **Troop the Colour** on **Horseguards' Parade** on 15 June, for the celebrations of the **Queen's Official Birthday**. Applications (in writing) for tickets are accepted from the public from 1 January to 29 February, and should include an SAE for acknowledgment.

Write to The Brigade Major, Headquarters Household Division, Horseguards, Whitehall, London SW1A 2AX. Demand is great, and a ballot to decide the lucky winners is held in mid-March. Successful applicants are restricted to two tickets each for the actual **Queen's Birthday Parade**, but this number can be exceeded for either of the two **Reviews** (rehearsals): the **Major-General's Review** on 1 June, and the **Colonel's Review** on 8 June. Send no money with applications; you will be asked later for admission of about £12.50 for the Parade or £7 for the **Colonel's Review**; the **Major-General's Review** is free.

... around **Appleby Horse Fair** from 5 to 12 June. This equestrian extravaganza is Europe's biggest Romany ensemble. Call 01325 362933.

## World Offers.

Flight prices from:

Barcelona £119  
Brussels £69  
Caracas £529  
Dubai £449

Fare £114  
Hong Kong £599  
Larnaca £129  
Los Angeles £296  
Mexico City £439  
Rome £169  
San Francisco £296  
Stockholm £205  
Venice £118

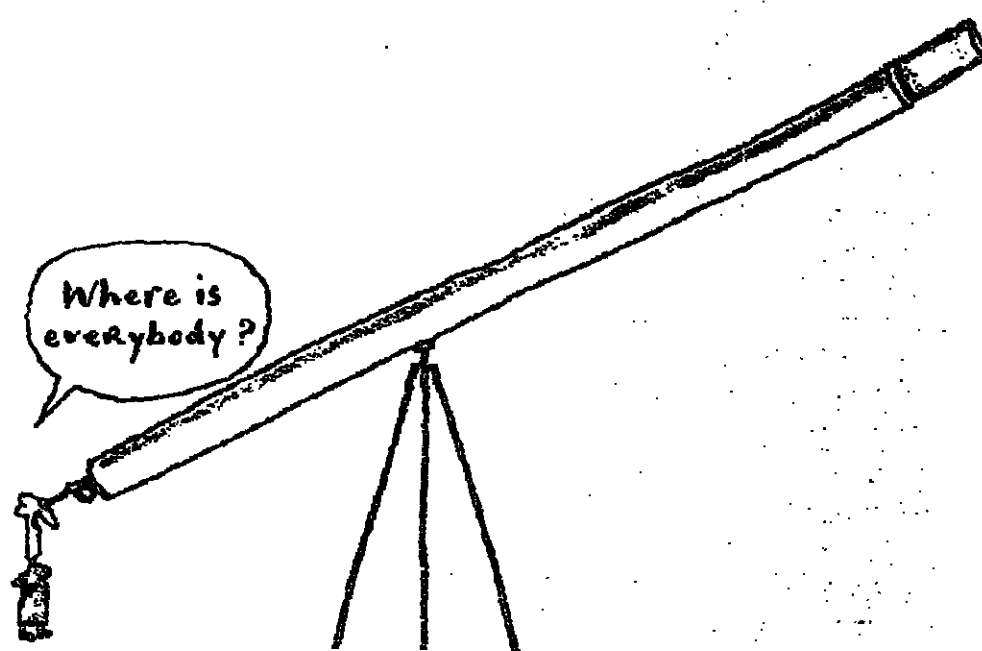
With World Offers the whole world is now within everybody's reach, so for these and many other amazing offers, call us anytime on:

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All fares listed are return from London, may be subject to limited availability, travel periods and must be booked by 17th January 1996. Passenger taxes apply. For details and conditions see ITV Teletext page 380, your travel agent or British Airways Travel Shop.

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# Where the world begins and ends each day

Just east of New Zealand's tiny Chatham Islands is the invisible International Date Line. By Jeremy Hart

The Chatham Islands are specks of land so exposed they seem in danger of being blown away by the Roaring Forties. East of them is the area where the world begins and ends each day. Some of the balmy Tongan islands are closer to the invisible date line but, in summer, nowhere sees the new dawn earlier than the 750 humans and 250,000 sheep on the Chathams.

Few New Zealanders have heard of this rocky dependency 400 miles from Wellington. The islands don't even appear on many New Zealand maps and such treatment has fuelled an air of secessionism. A flag of independence has even been designed. It depicts a green island and a brilliant rising sun on a blue background. The image is as optimistic as a Michael Fish weather forecast.

"Only one in five dawns have a sunrise," said John Sutherland, owner of the islands' only tourist lodge. "No one watches the weather forecasts on TV. They are always the same and usually wrong."

The sea is the lifeblood of the Chathams. In the Sixties, crayfish were discovered in their thousands off the rocky cliffs. The cray boom that followed made millionaires out of the fishermen, who now drive £70,000 American pick-up trucks, ride more Harley Davidsons and own the highest number of fax machines per head anywhere in the world.

The cray boom was over in a matter of years, but still Tokyo's fish market demands Chatham's crabs and abalone. On the wharf at Waitangi, the island's only town, each boatload of crustaceans is worth up to £50,000. There isn't a poor fisherman on the island.

Yet it isn't just the seafood that put the Chathams on Japanese maps. On New Year's Eve 1989, Japanese television beamed live pictures of the first dawn of the 1990s from Manakau Point, one of the most easterly promontories on the islands. John Sutherland helped co-ordinate the broadcast.

"They flew in two cargo planes of equipment, paid the \$22,000 lodge bill from a brown paper bag of notes and drank 600 cans of Steinlager," he recalled. "But they had no idea what they were doing."

"They had promised free tucker and booze out at the Point and seven hundred people turned up. That's almost all the islanders. Then it pissed down with rain. Luckily the Japanese team had recorded the sunrise from the day before to show people what the dawn here can look like."

In reality there is only one place to watch the dawn in the islands, on the beach below Ken and Eva Lanza's homestead on Pitt Island. Chatham's tiny neighbour. The problem is getting across to Pitt.

The 55 islanders (the population recently rose by 13 per cent when Eva's daughter Bernice returned to her birthplace with her five children) are dependent on a five-seat Air Chathams Cessna to get on and off a waterlogged airstrip. Twice our flight to the gorge-tufted islet was cancelled.

Getting anything on or off Pitt calls for a miracle. Last year's wool is still bundled 10ft high on Pitt's Flowerpot wharf. Five times the monthly ship to the mainland has been forced away by bad weather.

"I was only born on the island because it was too rough to get me to



The best place to see in the dawn is from Pitt Island, the only problem is getting there

Photograph: Julia Thorne

the hospital on Chatham. That was before the plane," shouted Bernice from the front of her four-wheel motorbike, the only sensible transport across the peaty landscape.

We had brought 20 litres of fuel over from Chatham on the plane, to keep the bike roadworthy. Four of us clung to its muddy luggage rack for the 20-minute jolt along rutted tracks to Kahuitara Point. Past Kahuitara, the next stop is Chile, 4,000 miles ahead and a day behind.

We sat drinking coffee and eating scones in a windblown wooden house. A giant satellite dish was hidden between bushes behind it. Television and direct dial telephones came to the islands at the same time four years ago. "Great for the kids, but it's ruined the art of conversation," said Eva, pulling more scones out of the oven.

The sun beamed in through expansive double-glazed windows. The only view is to the east, over green, water-logged fields and sandy cliffs to an electric-blue ocean.

Ken and Eva are proud of their place at the start of each new day. "We get some beautiful sunrises here and we're

always aware that we are the first to see each new day. It's not something you tire of."

Thirty years on from the cray boom, sunrises over the Southern Ocean could bring the Chathams a second wave of wealth. It will be the first place to see the dawn of the new Millennium.

On the rocks below the Lanzae homestead, Pitt Islanders, television crews and a handful of tourists (reputedly willing to pay up to £75,000) will witness the first dawn of the 21st Century. Pitt sees the dawn a minute before Chatham and over an hour before Gisborne, the most easterly town in New Zealand.

Gisborne is already booked up for the Millennium celebrations, but the islanders take great delight in mocking the mainlanders' plans. "Last New Year's Day, just as the sun came up here, I called the radio station in Gisborne and asked them if it was light yet," joked John Sutherland. "Of course it wasn't."

Brad Roberts, a London entrepreneur, claims to have signed rights to the three most easterly points on Pitt and Chatham Islands, but on islands where

suspicion is part of their psyche, none of the three landowners will admit to signing with his First Light organisation.

"We've given them permission to do a trial run here before the Millennium, and if we are happy we will look at their plan," said a cautious Eva. "We want to make sure the plan will benefit the whole island."

The excitement of massive, tented villages and CNN broadcasting from Pitt could all be superseded by the fierce Roaring Forties climate. "They could spend a lot of money getting here and not even see a sunrise. Knowing Pitt, it will probably be foggy," laughed Eva. Getting out to Pitt, and back, was an achievement. Ocean flying, especially in a plane that lets in the rain through the windscreen surround, is not for the nervous of disposition.

After Pitt, Chatham Island felt like a thriving metropolis. Chatham doesn't have much - occasional tarred roads, a pub, a solitary bank, one policeman and a general store - but that's probably more than Pitt will ever have.

Things were quiet at the pub in Waitangi for a Friday night. There are 60

## How to get there

The Chatham Islands are best approached via New Zealand. Australian Flight Centre (0500 727747) has a fare of £775 (including tax) to Auckland on British Airways/Qantas in March. If you book by close of business tomorrow, if not, plenty more cut-price fares are available from discount agents to Auckland and Christchurch. The only flights to the Chatham Islands are twice weekly on Air New Zealand from Christchurch, and cost around £140.

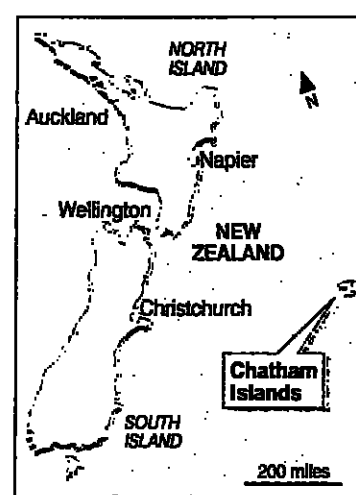
## Where to stay

Chatham Island Lodge, PO Box 43, Waitangi, Chatham Islands (00 64 3 305 0196).

## Where else to see in the Millennium

Greenwich: the origin of measurements of time and space for the whole planet. Sydney: venue for the Olympic Games in the year 2000.

Balboa, Panama Canal Zone: due to be handed back by the United States to Panama at noon on 31 December 1999. St Paul, Minneapolis: birthplace of the artist formerly known as Prince. "Tonight we're gonna party like it's 1999..."



committees on the Chathams, covering everything from pig hunting to the annual New Year's horse races. They siphon off a huge number of the islanders each night. As does Chatham Island Television.

From five to 11, everything from *The Bill* to *Knight Rider* is played on tapes flown in (God-willing) weekly. The only live programme is the six o'clock news from Auckland, shown at 6.45pm. The Chathams sit in their own 45 minute time zone.

For five dollars, whilst the rest of New Zealand watches shampoo and dog biscuit commercials, islanders can type their own advertisements and messages on Chatham Islands TV. One made me glad I had eaten at the lodge, and not the pub. "There are no bar meals tonight. The cook has food poisoning."

John Sutherland chortled as he cleared away our plates and wandered over to turn off the television. As he reached for the knob, the weather flashed up on the screen. Uncharacteristically, it made him pause, then laugh out loud. "Tomorrow it will be flat-arse calm," he remarked.



SIMON CALDER

This has been the best year yet for people prepared to take a chance on finding a last-minute holiday bargain, and one of the worst for the mass-market travel industry. One in three of package holidays from the UK were booked late and at a discount.

Since the disastrous (for them) and delightful (for us) month of August, when tour operators were almost paying people to take peak-season holidays, there have been warnings from the trade about a cut in capacity, to teach us consumers a lesson. With fewer holidays on sale, the theory goes, prices will rise and there will be no need for large-scale discounting. Ninety-nine pound holidays which many of us enjoyed, were to become as extinct as *Intasun*.

Yet as the big holiday sell has gained momentum this week, what should pop up on Wednesday but a wide selection of £99 holidays courtesy of Airtours. Charles Newbold, managing director of Britain's biggest tour operator, counters with the promise of "Thomson holidays at last-minute prices without waiting until the last minute." Travel agents are going into a frenzy of discounting to match the sale fever elsewhere in the High Street. To me, your summer holiday does not look much like a commodity in short supply.

The travel industry is clinging to the hope that every operator will reduce capacity as promised, which should cut the number of package holidays by a million. Yet even in the unlikely event that the industry sticks to its guns, this does not mean that a million people will suddenly discover in August that there is nowhere to go.

Package tour operators may have been too busy dreaming up marketing schemes to notice that a fares war of stupendous proportions is about to break out on the Channel. After the Tunnel doubled capacity on the short-sea routes, the ferry companies have done the exact opposite of what any rational observer would expect: they have increased capacity still further. If there are not enough air holidays to go around, then the surface operators can be relied upon to come up with alternatives - and, no doubt, those of us who decide late will get discounts.

So how can we be persuaded to book early? Britain's biggest travel agency chain, Lunn Poly, believes it has an answer (funded, like most agency discounts, by overpriced insurance). You book your holiday in January and take it in August, but don't have to pay until the following year. I am all in favour of marketing innovations that benefit the consumer, but I fear Lunn Poly could be biting off quite a lot with this new trick. For a start, its sales potential could rebound in a year's time. Just as all the advertising to persuade you to book a new holiday starts, the bill comes in from the previous one.

Worse still, our files are full of holiday atrocity stories, where things have not turned out as sunnily as the brochure promised. The theme common to most grumbles is, "I want my money back." If no money has changed hands, the dissatisfied customer can see an obvious remedy. Judging by the vitriol of some complainants, I would not want to be the one asking for cash.

Yet for all the doom-laden prophecies, Britain's travel industry looks in fair shape to continue to provide the best-value holidays of any country in the world. Happy new horizons.

## The chalet-hotel is in a grey area. Is it an overgrown chalet or a hotel with a chummy atmosphere?

We all know what constitutes a hotel, and most of us know what constitutes a catered chalet. But the chalet-hotel is increasingly a grey area; it can be an overgrown chalet, or it can be more of a hotel with a chummy, house-party atmosphere. On the one hand, this leads to a wider choice of styles of holiday. On the other, it means you need to be careful to pick the one that is right for you.

The basics are clear enough. A chalet-hotel (or a club chalet, or a jumbo chalet) is a building that is big enough to be a hotel, run by a British tour operator along traditional catered chalet lines, with British staff. Because in many cases the building has indeed been run as a hotel in the past, you get some benefits not normally associated with chalets - in particular, bedrooms of a decent size, with en suite bathrooms. Because it's big, the inmates eat at a number of separate tables, rather than in the traditional refectory style - though who you get to chat to is still normally pot luck. There is often a bar, which may or may not be open to non-residents: indeed, some of Mark Warner's chalet-hotels in Verbier and Val d'Isère, especially, are major hubs of the nightlife.

A year or two back, I might have risked a further generalisation: that

### Snow's up

By Chris Gill

chalet-hotels were neither stylish nor luxurious, being based on rather cheerless old hotels that were in need of investment to prolong their active life. Not so now.

My recent review of the best chalets in the key resorts of Méribel, Courchevel and Val d'Isère included one - FlexiSki's 20-bed Lodge Nogentil - that retains all the style and warmth of the charming little French-run hotel that until this season it was. This place in many cases the building has indeed been run as a hotel in the past, you get some benefits not normally associated with chalets - in particular, bedrooms of a decent size, with en suite bathrooms. Because it's big, the inmates eat at a number of separate tables, rather than in the traditional refectory style - though who you get to chat to is still normally pot luck. There is often a bar, which may or may not be open to non-residents: indeed, some of Mark Warner's chalet-hotels in Verbier and Val d'Isère, especially, are major hubs of the nightlife.

A few weeks back, I discovered another non-standard chalet-hotel - again, still formally registered as a hotel - but one that is a lot bigger (more than 70 beds), and a lot cheaper (less than £500 except in half-term week). It is the Cristallo, in Courmayeur, offered

as a British-run chalet-hotel for the first time this winter by Bladen Lines.

The Cristallo is a three-star hotel, renovated with great style only a couple of years ago. Heavily carved wooden doors lead to mostly spacious bedrooms, well equipped with glossy bathrooms in classic Italian style. The first-floor sitting room (with bar) is atmospheric and welcoming. And the position is pretty well unbeatable. It is just off the pedestrianised Via Roma at the captivating heart of Courmayeur, close to some of the very best bars, and a tolerable stroll from the cable-car that is the start and finish of the skiing day in this emphatically not purpose-built resort.

I left the enveloping charm of Courmayeur and the Cristallo for the brutality of Tignes. Happily, the chalet-hotel where I was accommodated there is traditional in style: Ski Olympic's brand-new 42-bed chalet Rosset has the pitched roof that French resort architects have been forced to revert to, and a bright, pleasant interior. Having been built as a chalet rather than a hotel, the Rosset does not have notably spacious bedrooms. Ski Olympic describes them as "small to medium in size"; my colleague and I were grateful to collapse in a small one, but on holiday I'd go to some lengths to bag a medium one.

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The mill is unfortunately unable to take children due to the setting.

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# Home of first division tosh

It's not the "City By The Bay" that Tony Bennett crooned about. And unlike San Francisco, it has no tramcars (the last one meandered to Mumbles more than 30 years ago). Swansea does not present its best face to the traveller. Entering by road or rail, you are confronted by evidence of its industrial origins. Still, at least the presence of an oil terminal on the city boundary means that four star is competitively priced.

Sadly, it can't be for a paddle. The beautiful beaches of the nearby Gower peninsula are pleasant enough, but there was a spate of viruses at Oxwich Bay a couple of summers ago, allegedly caused by entering the water here.

Best perhaps to dip into a good book. This year, Swansea has been revelling in its role as 1995 UK City of Literature and Writing. The languid figure of Dylan Thomas casts a somewhat alcoholic shadow over the city. Thomas was raised here, and later made his home in the small seaside town of Laugharne, 30 miles away. "This lovely, ugly town," he called Swansea, but the Festival organisers chose to accentuate the positive. Indeed, they managed to entice former US President Jimmy Carter to be honorary president of the celebrations on the back of his admiration for Thomas.

In the glossy Festival brochure, two other Swansea literary figures were conspicuous by their absence. One, the late Kingsley Amis, was a former university lecturer in the city and was well known for his curmudgeonly reputation. He even



Photograph: Patricia Aithie

accused Thomas of being outstandingly unpleasant and peeing on his friends' carpets, heaven help us.

But the most glaring omission was that of John Toshack, football idol and the Third Man of Swansea literature. The title of his slim volume of poetry, *Gosh It's Tosh*, whets one's appetite. It was written while he was leading the Liverpool attack. Toshack later created sporting history when, as player-manager, he took Swansea City to the old First Division for the only time in their existence.

Overcoming a cruel accident of birth (he first saw the light of day in Cardiff), Toshack quickly became a folk hero in Swansea and now lives locally. Despite this, his poetry did not feature anywhere in the city's celebrations. A cruel oversight, but let's compensate with a quick quote:

*We're coming in to land at Speke,  
My legs are feeling very weak,  
We've just returned from Barcelona.  
And now I'm going for a sauna.*

(From 'Return From Spain', Duckworths, 1978).

But back to the question - why go to Swansea? Have I mentioned the best market in the British Isles where you can buy scaweed to fry with bacon for breakfast, fresh cockles from Penclawdd, and melt-in-your-mouth cakes? Or the pub-crawling potential offered by the hostelrys lining the sweep of the bay between the city and nearby Mumbles?

Did I tell you about the St Helen's Ground, where you can watch cricketers toil as the oil tankers negotiate the sandbanks of Swansea Bay? Glamorgan's Malcolm Nash was once bluelegged for six sides in a row here by Gary Sobers. "Think I'll write a book about this," mused the bowler. "Anyone know what to call it?" The most sympathetic suggestion was *Gone With The Wind*.

## Quotes of the year from our travel correspondents

**January**  
"The sky and the sea had merged into an ugly grey damp which the wind, direct from Greenland, was washing across the promenade." - *Jim White in Blackpool, 28 January*

**February**  
 "At the city's heart is a cathedral that knows few equals in Europe, with a spire of such flaky delicacy it seems the work of the confectioner's rather than the mason's art." – *Tim Salmon in Strasbourg, 11 February*

**"Washing facilities for perspiring hikers comprise a bowl of hot water carried from the kitchen through a field of friendly sheep" – Teresa Allan at Black Sail Hut youth hostel, 18 February**

**March**  
"Captain (one), disc jockey (one),  
gentlemen escorts (eight)" — the staff list  
on the Queen Elizabeth 2, 11 March

"Suddenly, the texture of the snow changed; it became lumpy and relatively heavy, leading one of our number to take an awkward but fortunately survivable fall. We had skied into an avalanche." — *Chris Gill in the Silvretta ski area on the Swiss-Austrian border, 25 March*

"The glittering soft sand went on as far as the eye could see. Bit by bit the kookahurras began their rude caw-caws. Then from nowhere a boy on horseback appeared, crashing through the waves, arms thrown back in glee." — *Esther Oxford in the Gambia*, 25 March

**April**  
 "They seem to like Hulme  
 - some of them say it  
 reminds them of East  
 Berlin before the Wall  
 came down" - *Robin Pike,*  
*proprietor of the Mr Beds*  
*hostel in Manchester, on w*  
 *Germans are his biggest*  
*customers, 1 April (but not*  
*an April Fool)*

"The pick-up point was Huddersfield station on Christmas Eve morning, 1986. A man with a clipboard pointed to three buses and shouted 'First coach goes to Moscow, t'second goes to Leningrad, t'third to Bingley market.'" — Alex Shorrocks  
*reminding about the late, great Yorkshire Tours, 15 April*

**June**  
"There are plenty of fluffy puppies gambolling around - which the Batal eat. Horses too, in fact anything going. They used to eat each other." - *Flann O'Brien in Samosir, Indonesia, 3 June.*

"Frinton has a feel of the Fifties about it. There are plenty of ladies in cardigans and old gentlemen in ties. It looks like the kind of place John May had in mind when he spoke of spinning on bicycles and cricket on the village green." - Anne Spackman, 17 June

**August**  
 "Down at the village hall, people staked their territory around the floor by lining up their whisky bottles next to their chairs. Then they hit the dance floor."  
*Marion Hume in Scotland, 26 August*

**September**  
 "This is our guest house. I use it for storing our enemies' heads" he said, smiling. We smiled back."  
 — *Charlie English in Sarawak*  
**23 September**

**"History is something you learn by the ton on the 250-mile journey along the borderlands of Northern Ireland; here, everyone you meet is something of a bar-**

room expert in history and folklore.  
- Jonathan Glancey,  
30 September

**November**  
 "Outside the terminal, the air has a distinctive loamish smell of cowering fires, cheap beedi cigarettes and earth that's been ploughed for a millennium. Hundreds of sleeping bodies lie on the pavement; they are labourers waiting for the next morning's flight to the Gulf but their presence gives an impression that the airport is the highwater mark of some catastrophe."

— *Tim McGirk, Delhi, 4 November*

**"New York City is heading back to its waterways. The restless city, erected mostly on islands has nowhere to move so it reclaims riverfront and wetland, rebuilds rotting docks and piers."**  
—Reagie Nadelson, 18 November

"The problem with France these days  
less the French than the British. We're  
everywhere, and boy are we ugly."  
- *Serena Mackey, Calais, 25 November*

**December**  
 "Back in the bar, the faces on a huddle of Norwegians reveal the grim desperation of drinkers who realise they will shortly be back in the land of the £5 pint." - *Simon Calder aboard the Color Viking*. 23 December

**Top: Queen Elizabeth 2, home to eight gentlemen escorts. Left: Batak carving on Samosir island, Indonesia. Photos: Simon Calder/Harriet O'Brien**

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## property and motoring

# What will happen to your house in 1996?

Property prospects for the new year are mixed. Anne Spackman assesses the possibilities for three sectors of the market



The young renter, Edward Longe, a 27-year-old banker, moved from one rented London flat to another, larger one last September. 'Until the housing market picks up, I wouldn't think about buying... The fees are around 5 per cent. You've got to be sure you can get that back when you resell.'



The single owner, film producer Bob Baldwin in his loft-style apartment in Clerkenwell, London. There is a growing market for people like him: wealthy singles who are buying a lifestyle rather than a flat.



The family. Last summer the Goodes moved from a seven-bedroom Victorian house in Norwich to a five-bedroom modern one in Sevenoaks. Demand for family houses has been growing during 1995: buyers are increasingly unable to find period homes to suit them and are turning to the new-build sector.

Candidates in the annual house price guessing game have this year produced such similar results that they might be accused of conferring. House prices in 1996 will rise by two per cent, is the experts' view. So the one thing most owner-occupiers can be sure of is that the value of their house will not rise by two per cent next year.

This is not cynicism – though given the accuracy of previous predictions, that might be justified. It is simply the realisation that a national prediction has become meaningless. If price rises average out at two per cent, most people are likely to see no rise or a bigger rise depending on the kind of house they own. Two per cent is, in any case, such a tiny increase (£1,200 on a £60,000 house) that it falls well within normal negotiating margins.

For most in the property world, 1995 was a year of great disappointment. The Halifax Building Society believes the housing market went into a second recessionary dip from which it is now emerging. Prices in the mainstream market fell by nearly two per cent and the number of house sales fell to 1.15m – compared with 1.3m in 1994 and 2.1m in 1988. The effect has been to strengthen the notion that there may be good years and bad years, but the general trend is one of stable prices and low volumes.

The property market now shows signs of dividing into three broad sectors: at the bottom are

the former council houses, small terraces and starter homes – hotbeds of negative equity, which remain almost impossible to sell; next comes the mainstream market epitomised by the three-bedroom semi where prices are flat and sales sluggish; finally there is the quality market for good homes in good locations, where demand outstrips supply.

If those homes are in London, or the places London workers like to live, they are already likely to have seen prices recover by between 10 and 30 per cent since 1992. As the capital has grown into one of the major financial cities of the world, demand for property – and prices – has grown with it. London increasingly operates separately from the rest of the UK housing market, and the market is expected to remain broadly flat for the next 18 months.

As London's recovery has been heavily influenced by foreign buyers, it has had no impact on the rest of the country. Instead, those places which are performing best are other cities with strong financial sectors, such as Leeds and Edinburgh, plus those areas with good communications. So mainline Cambridge is doing well at the expense of branchline Norwich, while the Bristol/Bath axis outperforms much of the south west.

As a recent survey for the Nationwide Building Society pointed out, fear and uncertainty in the housing market is primarily linked to jobs. People put off

extending their mortgage or buying their first home because they were afraid of unemployment.

Now many estate agents and analysts believe the public has grown accustomed to job insecurity. They understand that this is as secure as it gets, according to Gary Marsh of the Halifax Building Society. He believes that if people need to move, they might as well do it. 'The only other choice is to live in the same house for ever.'

**The young renter** Despite rent rises of up to 10 per cent in 1995 the lettings market has continued to grow. In the cities, where renting now accounts for between 20 and 30 per cent of estate agency business, it has been the tenure of choice for thousands of young workers in their twenties and thirties. Everyone believes that practice will continue. But could 1996 be the year those first generation renters decide to become buyers?

Many say yes. Researchers for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation believe the shift from owning to renting has reached a plateau among young people. Winkworth, the London chain active in this market, believes the same. 'Six years ago, when the property market collapsed, these buyers were in their early to mid-twenties; now they're approaching thirty,' says Simon Agace, Winkworth's chairman. 'As new priorities develop – for example marriage and children – home ownership is likely to be per-

ceived as a desirable and even necessary status. Even if diluted over a three or four year period, this group of waiting buyers still represents a concentration of demand that will almost certainly push up the value of two-bedroom flats and houses in good areas of London.'

Willie Gething of the buying agency Property Vision disagrees. He thinks the boom in central London rentals will ripple out through the capital. 'Corporations are not going to give their employees licence to buy,' he says. 'Nor will they pay huge rents. Instead, they will say the banker who lives in south Brooklyn can live in Clapham, rather than Kensington, when he transfers to London.'

Common to all is the belief that when they do buy a home, these late starters will leapfrog the lowest rungs of the housing ladder. As a result, those small flats which have lost up to 30 per cent in value, will see no improvement. Their owners will either have to rent them out or stick it out, as they face their seventh year of negative equity.

**The single owner** There was a Monty Python sketch in which John Cleese played a businessman who marvelled at the way charities could collect money from people simply by shaking a tin in the street. 'What, you mean you just ask them for money and they give it to you? Amazing.' The same might be said of some loft devel-

opers. 'What, you mean you buy up a derelict old building, clean it up and put in a bit of wiring and people pay a premium for having to put the walls and fittings in themselves?' In property terms 1995 was the year of the loft. Anyone who invested in glass bricks or timber flooring must be laughing all the way to the bank.

With people having children much later, and high levels of family break-up, the singles market is growing, particularly in cities. A niche market has evolved for child-free, fairly wealthy adults, who are buying a lifestyle rather than a certain number of bedrooms. The London chain Foxtons sold two flats near Clapham Common for premium prices in 1995. 'Both properties were good examples of stylish well-presented accommodation which the imaginative buyer is showing an increasing interest in,' said Peter Rollings. As the number of small households grows, this niche is expected to expand further in 1996.

**The family** 'On no, not another cash buyer,' was the estate agent's lament when a couple arrived at his office in Winchester, Hampshire. Like most prosperous parts of the country, Hampshire has been bedevilled by a lack of period houses for the many families keen and able to buy. In that particular niche it is a seller's market. In November Strutt & Parker's Exeter office sold five

out of six properties for more than the guide price.

Demand for family houses in the most popular villages and suburbs has carried on growing throughout 1995. Families are having to pay a premium for well laid-out accommodation, green space and good schools. If they cannot find a period house to suit they are increasingly turning to the new-build sector. The Nationwide index for newly-built properties in the third quarter was up 7.9 per cent on 1994 while the general index was down 0.8 per cent.

Quality is the key. Berkeley Homes, which targets the top of the new build market, reported a rise in pre-tax profits of 31 per cent this year. Savills stresses how the quality sector has outperformed the mainstream. 'Prime country houses have benefited from high growth concentrated at the top end of the housing ladder amongst equity-reliant buyers without mortgages. But they have also been held back due to a lack of trading up activity from the lower reaches of the provincial market,' it reports.

That mainstream provincial market has been disappointingly sluggish in 1995. Owners of houses which have no outstanding features find they can only compete with the dozens of others on offer by reducing their price. The worst problems are on estates built in the Sixties and Seventies, where the design and build quality are poor. It is a buyer's market, but there are very few buyers.

### Househunter

Leominster, Herefordshire



Humber Court, along with a church, a former rectory and one other house, makes up the hamlet of Leominster. The Grade II listed 17th-century house has a particularly attractive facade, with decorative stone mullions around the windows and front door. Inside it features stone flagged floors, with open fireplaces downstairs in the three reception rooms and kitchen-breakfast room, and five bedrooms and two bathrooms upstairs. Outside there are two paddocks and an ornamental pool in the two and a half acres of garden. Knight Frank & Rutley in Hereford (01432 273087) is asking £250,000.

### For What It's Worth

Estate agents are longing to hear the bells ring in the new year, partly because they believe 1996 cannot possibly be as bad as 1995 and partly because for five successive years January has seen a flurry of activity. It seems the Christmas holidays are one of the few times families can sit down together and take big decisions about their lives. Those who decide to move house tend to get on with it straight away, rather than waiting for the traditional spring season.

The same applies to those who decide to divorce. Christmas is sadly the season of family breakdown, leading to an annual wave of houses on the market in January.

If you plan to be a new year seller, there is one overwhelming message from estate agents. As J Riddle of Eadon, Lockwood and Riddle in Sheffield puts it in the latest monthly report from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors: 'When the price is right, the phone rings with enquiries and offers. When it isn't, it doesn't. It is almost as simple as that, and vendors who accept this maxim are the ones who are selling.'

### Who's Moving

The spring launch of the London branch of The Fashion Café, the burgers and supermodel eatery, is being masterminded from a house in Mayfair. Francesco Buti, the Vice-President of The Fashion Café, has rented a house in Culross Street, where prices average £2,500 a week, through Aylesford.

## The best and worst of last year's cars

By Gavin Green



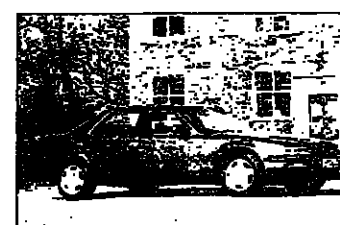
Best small buy: Ford Fiesta



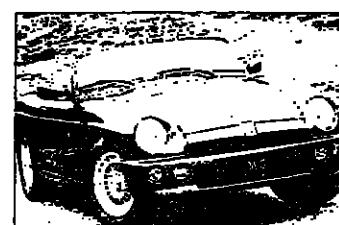
Worst small buy: Vauxhall Corsa



Best luxury buy: Jaguar XJ6



Worst luxury buy: Honda Legend



Best sports buy: MGF



Worst sports buy: MG RV8

The past 12 months did not see the reinvention of the car, when many say that's what was really needed. Rather, 1995 saw car makers take risks. The upshot is that, in most classes, the stakes were raised – in some cases decisively. Seven cars in this year's Top 10 are newcomers for 1995.

### Small cars

**Best buy:** Ford Fiesta (£7,595-£10,630) What a difference a year makes! Once Europe's technical duffer, Ford experienced a revolution in 1995. Most extraordinarily, it transformed the Fiesta from class duncie into school genius.

The new Fiesta, in its best 1.25-litre guise, has a brilliant Yamaha-developed engine, rides and handles with aplomb, and has one of the most imaginatively designed dashboards ever seen. OK, it's nose is ugly (looking like a carp with mouth agape), and it's cramped in the back. But it compensates with excellent build quality. People trading up from the old model just won't believe the difference.

**Worst buy:** Vauxhall Corsa (£7,195-£11,450) Supermodel looks married to dinosaur technology. The ride is almost billy cart-like, and the handling is well behind the game.

### Small/medium cars

**Best buy:** Fiat Bravo/Brava (£9,608-£13,298) Fiat's new Escort/Golf rival, replacing the good but dowdy Tipo; Bravo's the three-door, Brava's the five-door. The former is more the sporty sophisticate, the latter a family car with flair. In both cases, you get fresh looks (inside and out), lots of room, good build quality, and enough driving brio to make once-dreary journeys enjoyable. The new Fiat has just gone on sale in Britain. Of the models available, I'd plump for the basic 1.4, a frugal sweet revving little motor with surprising verve.

**Worst buy:** Daewoo Nexia (£8,445-£10,245) Despite the clever ads and the unusual dealer network (there isn't one), Daewoo is just old-model just won't believe the difference.

Nexia is a rebodied Astra, a car that wasn't that good when Vauxhall sold it. It's no better now.

### Medium cars

**Best buy:** Peugeot 406 (prices not yet announced) On sale in February in Britain. Not a big step-ahead, the 406 is nonetheless a handsome, roomy, supple-riding, superior alternative to a Mondeo or Vectra.

**Worst buy:** Volvo 400. (£11,150-£16,650) An ageing, ordinary little car made pretentious by Volvo's marketing men. Cramped, not particularly well made, and technically old hat, the 400 is about to be supplanted in the class by a new Volvo, the S4. The expectation (and hope) is that it will soon be supplanted by it.

### Executive compact

**Best buy:** Audi A4 (£15,732-£24,034) Another newcomer, the A4 narrowly pips the old favourite, BMW 3-series, by dint of its better build

quality, sculptural looks, more tasteful cabin, and more benign road manners. The Turbo model is particularly tasty, while the quattro V6 is probably the best four-wheel-drive road car in the world.

**Worst buy:** BMW 3-series Compact (£13,650-£15,650) BMW's crass attempt to go down-market. The recipe: take the fine 3-series, fit old-fashioned rear suspension which ruins handling fluency, fit a tackier looking cabin, and graft on a hatchback rear end. It looks funny, and drives unsatisfactorily. But, of course, a cheap BMW was always going to sell to those who value labels more than substance.

### Executive large

**Best buy:** Mercedes E-class (£23,500-£34,300) This is not so much 'engineering seen with fresh eyes' (the ad blurb) as an ugly snout, with four funny little headlamps, grafted on to a great car. There's nothing new about the engineering philosophy either: it's typically thorough Mercedes-Benz, which means it is the

best in the world. Beautifully made, roomy, comfortable, unerringly stable and reassuring on the road. It's expensive, of course; good things usually are. If you can stretch to an E-class, have no fear: the basic 2.0-litre E200 model, while not the best in the range, is surprisingly eager.

**Worst buy:** Nissan QX (£16,795-£25,540) A competent but totally uninspiring attempt by the Japanese to take on Europe's best. Vast depreciation will ensure that this will be a good secondhand buy, but until then, avoid it.

### Luxury

**Best buy:** Jaguar XJ6 (£29,450-£46,950) Not quite as well made as a Mercedes, not as quiet as a Lexus, not as much fun as a BMW. But for luxury nothing beats a Jaguar. Lovely cabin, classical styling, supple ride. It's the Edwardian drawing room, versus the hi-tech office approach of the Germans and Japanese. And under Ford, Jaguars just keep getting better.

**Worst buy:** Honda Legend (£31,655) Lovely V6 engine, but no other saving grace. Horrendous depreciation, unlike smaller Hondas.

### Estates/MPVs

**Best buy:** Mercedes E-class Estate (£25,200-£39,200) The new E-class isn't available in estate guise yet. Never mind: the old model is still the world's best estate. It's roomy, versatile, beautifully made and detailed, and remains one of Britain's lowest depreciating cars.

**Worst buy:** Nissan Serena MPV (£13,895-£16,240) Looks like a van, drives like a van. Miles behind the new-wave European MPVs.

### Coupés

**Best buy:** Fiat Coupé (£17,589-£19,489) A Vivienne Westwood dress on wheels, the Fiat Coupé is an amazing amalgam of scoops, slats and slashes which, to most eyes, works brilliantly. It is also fun to drive.

**Worst buy:** Aston Martin Vantage (£177,600) Last of the old school Astons. Bristlingly fast, indulgently thirsty, absurdly expensive. More like a high-speed truck than a sports car. Eccentric and without any real role – rather like Prince Charles, who likes them.

### Sports cars

**Best buy:** MGF (£15,995-£17,995) After a host of boringly competent but technically uninspiring Hondas-based Rovers, Britain's own car maker took a big dose of bravery pills and unveiled a brand new MG this year. It could have given us a tame, rebodied version of one of its hatchback models; instead it went for a pukka, rear-drive sports car dotted with new-wave mechanicals. It's the most impressive thing Rover has done in years.

**Worst buy:** MG RV8 (£25,440) Last of the old school MGs. Drive on, and you can see why Rover was so keen to change direction with the new model. Just gone out of production, but there are still a few around.



## money

# How to be better off in 1996

By Clifford German

**S**ome £7 billion worth of cash from maturing Tessa will flood out into the economy, boosting retail sales by up to 20 per cent in the first quarter of 1996, transforming the economic and perhaps the political outlook. So says IFA Promotion, the umbrella organisation for Independent Financial Advisers, who presumably have their fingers on the pulses of their clients.

Their calculations are based on the fact that two thirds of all Tessa accounts were started in the first three months following their introduction in 1991 and will be eligible to take their capital and accumulated interest tax-free when they start to mature in 1996. According to IFA Promotion £18.8 billion of capital and £5.2 billion will be up for grabs.

The interest cannot be rolled over and much of it may well be spent. But the 2 million Tessa account holders are not the only ones who expect to be better off in 1996. Most of us who manage to stay in work should be, thanks to the Chancellor. But if you are wise you will not go out and spend it all at once, because the New Year will also bring unprecedented demands on your finances. More than ever it will pay to shop around.

Property is worth looking at for the first time in seven years. No-one is predicting a runaway rise in prices, but residential property is now cheap on most historical assumptions. Prices, relative to income, and mortgage rates are both at their lowest levels for 30 years.

Even if you are staying put, review your mortgage closely. Variable mortgage rates are still falling and Bank of Scotland Mortgages Direct has loans at 6.99 per cent for up to 85 per cent of the property's valuation. Northern Rock offers a 1.1 per cent loyalty



Property: worth looking at for the first time in seven years

discount off its standard variable rate for mortgages over seven years old. At current rates you pay 6.44 per cent. Most lenders are still offering special deals to tempt first-time buyers and existing borrowers who move over and remortgage their existing properties with a new lender. Northern Rock is offering a 6 per cent discount on its standard rate for a year, the Greenwich is offering 3.5 per cent off its standard rate for two years or 2.5 per cent off for three years. Hinckley Building Society offers a 0.5 per cent fixed

rate until January 1997. First Mortgage Securities is offering 4.3 per cent fixed until 1998, and Yorkshire Building Society 6.25 per cent fixed for three years and Cheshire 7.49 per cent fixed until the year 2001.

Choose a fixed rate mortgage if you think rates are likely to go up, and a discount rate if you think they will be steady or fall. In doing your calculations don't forget to take account of any redemption fees your existing lender may charge, the costs of making a switch which can include a reservation fee for the new mortgage, a survey fee, a search fee and a solicitor's fee for the legal work, and last but not least the penalty fees if you sign up and opt out early. Most special offers now lock you in for five years, so a switch has to be a one-off move.

Check your insurances, and that nowadays includes a mortgage protection plan in case you can no longer earn the wherewithal to service your mortgage. Most mortgage protection plans will only pay you for around 12 months, but they will give you vital time to find another job, or failing that a buyer for the property who will pay you a proper price because you are not absolutely desperate to sell.

Household and motor insurance should be easier to find, thanks mainly to lower claims, helped by the milder winters and by the continued undercutting of premium rates by the direct sales organisations. Drop in at your local insurance broker or call some of the direct line insurers, and if you haven't joined a neighbourhood watch scheme, do so now. It might also be worth investing in a modern car alarm or immobiliser system, and having your door and window locks checked out and replaced if necessary.

But do check what happens if you need to claim. Many cut price policies are not as comprehensive as they sound, or leave big compulsory excesses for you to pay. While you are about it, check your life and health insurance and see if you can get a cheaper quote for your life assurance policies.

Time to look at the pension scene yet again. Pension contributions can be offset against tax. If your employer has a company pension scheme and you expect to stay with him, join it ASAP. If in doubt join it anyway, because it is the only way you will get your employer to contribute to your pension fund. Employers usually at least match the contribution you make to the company scheme. You may well also be able to make additional voluntary contributions at little or no administrative cost.

Remember an employer is not obliged to contribute to a portable pension plan, and few do. But the chances of you working your entire career for one employer have diminished and are still diminishing. Even civil servants no longer have a job for life. So if there is no company scheme – or if you are determined to move on within a couple of years – it might be best to start that personal scheme straightaway, rather than freezing your pension and negotiating a transfer value every time you move job. How much you get out of a personal pension depends on how well contributions are invested rather than how much you put in or how much you earn just before you retire. But the experts claim that to retire on around two thirds of your final earnings you may need to put something like 6 per cent of your gross income into a pension pot in your twenties, rising to 8 per cent in your thirties, 10 per cent in your forties, 12 per cent in your fifties and 15 per cent if you are lucky enough to go on earning into your sixties.

Pension provision is even more important for women than for men, and especially for women who plan to take a break to have children. From April onwards the divorce courts will be able to take pensions into consideration in divorce settlements and order pensions to be shared when they fall due, but two pension pots will always be better than one.

Once your mortgages, insurances and pensions are checked and satisfactory it is time to see what is left to save or invest. The big event of the next few weeks and maybe months will be the battle for the billions of pounds worth of Tessa tax-free deposit accounts which start maturing in 1996. The capital can be reinvested in a new Tessa, although the interest cannot, but you have six months after your first Tessa matures to decide whether to roll it over, so don't be in too much of a hurry. Interest rates are a lot lower than they were when the first Tessas started five years ago, and there is more competition from corporate bond Peps and ordinary share Peps this time round.

The most crucial choice for investors who stick with a Tessa is whether to go for a fixed rate or floating rate account this time round. Allied Trust Bank is offering 7.5 per cent fixed for five years on £9,000 rollovers, Sun Banking, a subsidiary of Sun Life of Canada is offering 7.25 per cent fixed for five years for those who think interest rates will trend lower over the next five years, or the option to start on a floating rate and switch to a fix after one, two or three years, which should appeal to anyone who thinks rates will actually trend higher between now and 2001. C&G offers 7.25 per cent on a minimum of £3,000.

Most investors will take advantage of the £6,000 they can invest in a Personal Equity Plan before they consider unit trusts, investment trusts or individual company shares outside the tax-free PEP shelter. The choice of trusts is now almost as great as the choice of shares. Trusts investing in UK funds will attract most money once again, and index tracker funds have the advantage of lower charges. Japan is recovering slowly after severe slump. But European shares also have their supporters on the grounds that they yield three times more than Japanese shares. European companies are also just beginning the painful but profitable process of slimming down their labour forces and shedding costs which UK companies have gone through in the last decade.

Many investors choose to invest through regular savings plan because they cannot find a lump sum. But regular savers will at least know they are getting progressively bigger tranches of stock for their monthly investment if share prices especially in the UK and US do start to fall.

## IN THE NEW YEAR...

### DO

Draw up some financial plans for 1996, giving top priority to the mortgage, then insurances and pension planning, then savings and investments if you can afford them.

Try to reduce your tax bills through a pension or tax-free investments.

Look for a cheaper mortgage if you haven't already got one. Likewise, check insurance premiums to see if you can get a cheaper quote without loss of cover.

### DON'T

Delay getting your pension sorted – you can't guarantee to get the best, but past performance and current charges will provide a guide.

Be in a hurry to renew that TESSA. You will be locked in for five years so get the best on offer. Turn your nose up at a modest regular savings plan – investing in a PEP unit trust or investment trust.

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**M&G is proposing to launch a new Investment Trust in February this year. This will be available for investment in The M&G PEP for a limited period only.**

**It will provide an opportunity for you to invest your tax free PEP allowance for both the current tax year and for the 1996/97 tax year – a total tax free investment of up to £12,000.**

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You should contact your independent financial adviser (if you have one) before investing. The price of units and the income from them can go down as well as up. The value to you of the tax benefits will depend on your own circumstances. The tax regime of PEPs could change in the future.

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## Best borrowing rates

TELEPHONE	% RATE AND PERIOD	MAX ADV %	FEE	INCENTIVE	REDEMPTION PENALTY
<b>Fixed rates</b>					
Hatchley & Pugh	0800 774499	0.50 to 1/1/97	70	£250	Free 3 yrs unemp mts
Chelton BS	01242 283680	4.74 to 1/2/98	80	£195	Redundancy mts end '96
Woolwich BS	0181-298 5000	7.49 to 1/2/01	95	£245	£250 rebate
<b>Variable rates</b>					
Principality BS	01222 344188	1.15 to 1/4/97	75	—	1st 5 yrs: indiv determined
Greenwich BS	0181-858 8212	4.99 for 3 years	95	—	1st 5 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Abbey National	0800 555100	6.34 to 31/1/01	75	—	To 1/2/03: reb red d & 6m int
<b>First time buyers fixed rates</b>					
Principality BS	0800 100117	0.95 to 30/11/96	90	£275	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Newcastle BS	0191-244 2442	4.59 to 28/2/98	95	£100	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed
Cheshire BS	0800 243278	7.49 to 1/1/01	90	—	To 30/1/01: indiv determined
<b>First time buyers variable rates</b>					
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	1.29 for 1 yr	95	—	Refund valuation fee
<b>Greenwich BS</b>					
Greenwich BS	0181-858 8212	3.99 for 2 yrs	95	—	1st 4 yrs: rebate reclaimed
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.19 to 1/2/99	95	—	1st 5 yrs: discount reclaimed

Telephone	APR	Fixed monthly payments (£3,000 over 3 years)
<b>Unsecured</b>		
Direct Line	0141 248 9966	14.9E
Midland Bank	0800 180180	15.4
Abbey National	0345 545556	15.5
<b>Secured (second charge)</b>		
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.6
First Direct	0800 242424	9.7
Royal Bank of Scotland	Via branch	9.8

Telephone	Account	Authorised % pm	Unauthorised % pm
<b>OVERDRAFTS</b>			
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.76
Alliance & Leicester BS	0500 958555	Alliance	0.76
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.79

Telephone	Card	Min income	Rate %	APR %	Annual fee
<b>CREDIT CARDS</b>					
Standard	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.96	£12
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.00	£12
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 161616	MasterCard	—	1.14	£12
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.5417	£120
Royal Bank of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05	£35 H

APR Annualised percentage rate.  
 A 1.58% (20.0% APR) for o/s but over £1K.  
 E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.  
 H Annual fee waived after first year if 0AM+ charged to card during previous year.  
 All rates subject to change without notice.

## Best savings rates

TELEPHONE NUMBER	ACCOUNT	NOTICE OR TERM	DEPOSIT	RATE %	INTEREST INTERVAL
<b>INSTANT ACCESS</b>					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	£100	4.80
Shipton BS	01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	£2,000	5.60
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.62
Shipton BS	01756 700511	3 High Street	Instant	£30,000	6.50
<b>INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS</b>					
Britannia BS	01538 362808	Capital Trust	Postal	£2,000	5.60
B&W Asset	0800 303330	Instant Access	Postal	£10,000	6.05
B&W Asset	0800 303330	Instant Access	Postal	£25,000	6.25
Manchester BS	0161-839 5545	Money by mail	Postal	£25,000	6.25
<b>NOTICE ACCOUNTS &amp; BONDS</b>					
Nottingham BS	0115-948 1444	Postmark	7 day P	£2,500	5.90
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 246248	Direct 60	90 day P	£15,000	6.50
Chelton BS	0800 272505	120 Account	120 day P	£1,000	6.50
Halifax BS	01422 333333	Special Reserve	1 year bond	£10,000	6.90
<b>MONTHLY INTEREST</b>					
Co-operative Bank	0345 252000	Pathfinder	Instant	£5,000	5.62
Leopold Joseph & Sons	0171-588 2323	40 Day Notice	40 day	£10,000	6.6875
Scarborough BS	0800 590578	Scarborough 50	30 day	£1,000	6.00
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 246248	Direct 60	60 day P	£15,000	6.30
<b>FIXED RATE BONDS</b>					
West Bromwich BS	0121-325 7070	Guaranteed Growth	31.1.97	£5,000	5.80 F
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	2 yr bond	£1,000	6.50 F
B'ham Midshires BS	0645 720721	Quantum Fund	3 yr bond	£5,000	7.25 F
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	Investment Certs	5 yr bond	£1,000	7.25 F
<b>TESSAS (TAX EXEMPT SPECIALS SAVINGS ACCOUNTS)</b>					
Allied Trust Bank	0171-626 0879	5 year	£9,000	7.50	Year
Sun Banking Corp	01438 744505	3 year	£8,575	7.25 F	Year
Cheltenham & Gloucester	0800 717905	5 year	£3,000	7.25	Year
Universal BS	0191-232 0873	5 year	£1	7.10	Year
<b>GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (NET)</b>					
AG Life	0181-680 7172	1 year	£5,000	4.55 FN	Year
AG Life	0181-680 7172	2 year	£20,000	4.95 FN	Year
Financial Assurance	0181-490 9157	3 year	£20,000	5.20 FN	Year
Pinnacle Life	01444 458721	4 year	£1,000	5.40 FN	Year
Pinnacle Insurance	0181-207 9007	5 year	£3,000	6.45 FN	Year
<b>OFFSHORE (GROSS)</b>					
Newcastle Bank, Gibr	00-350 76168	Nova Access	Instant	£5,000	6.20
Newcastle Bank, Gibr	00-350 76168	Nova 90 0 share	90 day	£25,000	6.85
Alliance & Leica, IOM	01624 663566	Investment Bond	1 yr bond	£10,000	7.00
B'ham Midshires, Guern	01481 700680	Fixed Account	31.1.99	£5,000	7.25 F
<b>NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS &amp; BONDS (GROSS)</b>					
Investment Account		1 month	£20	5.25	Year
			£500	5.75	Year
			£25,000	6.00	Year

P post only F fixed rate  
 N net rate  
 All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice. MONEYFACTS 01682 500677. 28 December 1995

FEAR OF FINANCE  
Clifford German

Some juicy plums are being dangled in front of investors to persuade them to roll over the capital on their maturing Tessa (Tax Exempt Special Savings Accounts) for another five years with the same lender, or to switch to someone making a better offer.

Investors with the maximum maturing sum of £24,000 can start a second Tessa on 8 per cent at Northern Rock, which tops the previous best offers of 7.5 per cent at Allied Trust Bank and 7.25 per cent from the Cheltenham & Gloucester, or take a fixed rate of 7.4 per cent at the TSB for the next five years. This has topped the previous best fixed rate of 7.25 per cent on a minimum of £8,575 available from Sun Banking Corporation, a subsidiary of Sun Life of Canada.

Good rates, according to Moneyfacts the subscription guide to best investments, are also offered on smaller sums. Birmingham & Midshires pays 7.25 per cent on upwards of £3,000 in a new variable rate Tessa or 7.05 per cent on similar sums fixed for five years. Universal Building Society offers 7.1 per cent on amounts as small as £1.

These are just the latest indications of the efforts of Tessa providers to persuade existing account holders roll their Tessa over and other holders transfer across. The amounts involved are simply staggering, and even after the expected spending spree the opportunities for investment providers are huge. But

the efforts to hold onto Tessa contrast strongly with the downward trend in rates available on other savings accounts. In the past few days Abbey National, Leeds & Holbeck, Bristol & West, Sun Banking, Melton Mowbray and the Newcastle building societies have reduced rates on most other accounts across the board. The cuts reflect the downward trend in lending rates, but the importance of retaining Tessa money suggests providers are also trying to rob other savers to pay Tessa account-holders to re-invest.

Once reinvested Tessa have to be kept for five years or lose tax-free status. Some providers also charge transfer fees to discourage withdrawals. Providers may be tempted to shift the balance to other savers once the Tessa are safely locked in. Holders of maturing Tessa have six months to decide on renewal. A short-term alternative, or taking up a fixed-rate Tessa now, may be worth considering. But who knows where rates will be in 2001.

Corporate bond PEPS offer little advantage in current yields but investors are not locked in for five years to get a tax-free investment, and bonds will provide some capital gain if interest rates fall rather than rise. Guaranteed stock market bonds offer varying combinations of guaranteed return and exposure to stock exchange growth, and the real speculators will keep a few hundred in hand for a punt on Railtrack.

## So how did 1995 measure up?

Justin Urquhart-Stewart detects some clues to future trends as he looks back at the investment highlights of the year

From uncertain beginnings, 1995 certainly became a vintage year for investment, with the FTSE 100 rising by over 20 per cent. But did we expect it? Back at the turn of the year there was no great feeling of confidence. The Government was looking insecure again, the stock market had a poor year in '94, and British financial pride was just about to be humiliated with the Barings fiasco. Not exactly an auspicious start.

But there was a springboard of interest for the private investor. The final tranche of PowerGen and National Power turned out sure fire winners, despite the strangely timed comments from the regulator which sent the shares sliding for a short period of time.

Also back in January came the first hints that the regional electricity companies might behave like standing dominoes. The Trafalgar House bid for Northern Electric was doomed but the concept which Trafalgar House had identified was about to be followed up very strongly by others. These Recs had a near guaranteed income, market and assets - but this was not reflected in their share price. Within weeks all this was to change, and the takeover frenzy lasted the whole year.

Domestically things were sluggish. But the market saw there were quality assets at good value prices for the taking. In the financial sector historic names such as Warburgs, Kleinwort Benson & Smith New Court all were taken over, and with the continuing rationalisation of the building societies, you could see the whole sector changing. Watch for this next year as well, with banks, insur-

ance companies and building societies all attempting to form wagon train circles for their own protection.

Hindsight is wonderful, but it is logical that the staggering costs of drug development means that mergers to pool resources are almost inevitable. In 1995 we had Glaxo and Wellcome, Fisons and RPR from France and there will no doubt be others involving Medeva and Zeneca who were also in the fray this year.

As many of these takeovers involved FTSE 100 companies, they had a disproportionate effect on the index. Confidence did extend further, but speculation was leading the market and I fear to an extent still is. At the time of writing I would see it as being healthy for the market to start just under 3600.

This enthusiasm was a marvellous coincidence for the birth of a newcomer. On 19 June a new stock market was launched, the Alternative Investment Market (AIM). This infant was not just a replacement for other smaller markets or trading rules. It was a genuine attempt to look at funding for growing companies from the customer's view point. And it has worked. To date 113 companies are quoted on it, funds have been raised and as a result jobs created.

In the autumn Tradepoint went live as a rival to the London Stock Exchange. It operates by matching institutional buy and sell orders together. This contrasts with the normal pattern of share trading in the UK through the exchange's market makers - who act as a form of wholesalers.

Such direct competition is indicative of what is happening around the world through increased automation. There will be more to come here.

A further advance was the introduction of corporate Bonds into Peps as from 10 July 1995. The attraction of fixed income from sources other than Gilts and Pibs (permanent interest-bearing shares issued by building societies) can only be helpful. But take care here. These are not risk free, and high income does not necessarily balance with high security.

In July the Stock Exchange improved the settlement system in the UK by introducing five day rolling settlement. This may sound horribly technical, but its impact was to push many investors towards transferring their assets to nominees, so their name no longer appears directly on the company register.

Now these can be very useful in the right hands in cutting out paperwork and speeding up payments, but a word of caution is appropriate to investors to ensure that they are not cut off in a nominee account from any company contact. If in doubt speak to your broker or bank and shop around. Next year this question will arise again with the introduction of Crest.

The changes in financial, chemicals and power companies are likely to continue and other sectors will also be affected, maybe water and building materials. The question is can we make every year a vintage year from here on? I very much doubt it - but we can learn to avoid making a pig's ear of it.

## INDEPENDENT

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## by James Rampton



No doubt persuaded by a cheque the size of Scotland, Sean Connery donned his wig and picked up his Walther PPK to play James Bond in *Never Say Never Again* (5.55pm BBC1). Though Connery could still rival reading out the telephone directory, Irvin Kershner's 1983 film lacks the panache of the actor's earlier outings in the 007 DJ.

Do you remember those seemingly far-off days when Robbie Coltrane was just another comedy actor and not a Bafta-bestrewn heavyweight thesp? *Nuns on the Run* (8.30pm C4), a throwaway comedy, hails from that earlier pre-*Cracker* period.

This tale of two lowlifes (Coltrane and Eric Idle) biding out in a nunnery has its moments, but never reaches the sublime comic heights its director Jonathan Lynn touched in co-writing *Yes, Minister*.

Despite a top-notch cast (Danny Glover, Kevin Kline, Steve Martin), Lawrence Kasdan's *Grand Canyon* (10pm, BBC2) flatters to deceive, with its grandiose themes wrapped around a group of middle-class characters. Like his earlier *The Big Chill*, it promises more than it delivers.

Gabriel Byrne, who fizzles in *The Usual Suspects*, made his big breakthrough with David Drury's *Defence of the Realm* (11.15pm C4), playing a journalist who discovers there's something rotten in the state of Britain.

## by Gerard Gilbert.

**J**ust in case you haven't heard - Burt Bacharach is hip. Noel Gallagher of Oasis says so. Elvis Costello has just written a song with him and Erasure are just about to release a Bacharach cover version. Easy listening is where it's at, and Burt Bacharach... **This Is Now** (8pm BBC2), instead of making you wonder at the vagaries of fashion, has you hot-footing it down to **Our Price** for the entire back list.

Backarach not only wrote kitsch classics like "What's New Pussycat?" and "Alfie" - this is also the man who penned "Walk on By", "Say a Little Prayer", "The Look of Love" and "I Just Don't Know What to Do with Myself". Now give the man some respect.

disease? No, he didn't, but it's a thought inspired by *Arena: The Burger and the King* (9pm BBC2), which is a biography of Elvis through his eating habits.

Elvis in later life showed the classic symptoms of a childhood where food was scarce (grilled squirrel once a week if he was lucky). The singer's idea of showing off his new-found wealth was to have a cheeseburger - because the cheese in the burger was considered a reckless luxury in the poor white trash circles where he was raised. He once took a private jet just to go and eat a renowned peanut-and-jello sandwich. There are an awful lot of calories in a peanut-and-jello sandwich, and it began to show.

There are a lot of calories in *The Peacock Spring* (9pm BBC1), a stodgy



two-part version of Rumer Godden's novel set in 1929 India, whether the two daughters of an English diplomat are summoned. More fun is *Frank's Little Red Riding Hood* (4.05pm BBC1), starring June Walters.

## ITV/Regions

**MILWAUKEE**  
As London escape: 12.40pm Coronation Street  
(60012)948; 1.10 Films Domestic, Comic strip com-  
edy (60012)98; 12.10pm Film Bonnie and Clyde  
(6004)569; 2.40am Film: The Wild Bunch. Sam  
Peckinpah's violent, landmark Western starring  
William Holden (505495)79; 5.25-5.55am The  
Morning Show (487344)2.

**THE TIMES/WORKSHIRE**  
As London escape: 12.40pm Coronation Street  
(60012)948; 1.10 Film Return of the Seven  
Samurai (60012)98; 12.40pm Film Happy New Year  
Comedy starring Peter Riegert (234711)1; 2.15am Film:  
The Pick-Up Artist. Romantic comedy starring Moly-  
Ringwald (485717); 3.45am An Evening with  
Pacino Domingo (338640)4; 4.45-5.55pm Oliver  
Twist (107965)3.

**CENTRAL**  
As London

**RTV**  
As London escape: 12.40pm Coronation Street  
(60012)948; 1.10 Films A Green Journey. Romantic  
drama starring Angela Lansbury (5292)2178;  
1.40pm Film Bonnie and Clyde (6004)569; 2.40am  
Film: The Wild Bunch. Western starring William Hold-  
en, Ernest Borgnine and Robert Ryan (505495)79;  
5.25am The Movie Show (445444)4; 8.30-5.55am  
An Invitation to Remember (445482)1.

**MEDIANOVA**  
As London escape: 12.40pm Coronation Street  
(60012)948; 1.10 Alice in Wonderland (5292)301;  
1.40pm Film: The Seven Years' Itch (5292)2178;  
2.40pm Film: Bonnie and Clyde (6004)569; 2.40am  
Film: The Wild Bunch. Sam Peckinpah's violent, land-  
mark Western starring William Holden, Ernest Bor-  
gine and Robert Ryan (505495)79; 5.25-5.55am  
The Morning Show (487344)2.

**WESTCOUNTRY**  
As London escape: 12.40pm Coronation Street  
(6004)569; 1.10 Films Return of the Seven Sam-  
urais; 12.40pm Film: Bonnie and Clyde (6004)  
569; 2.40am Film: The Wild Bunch. Western star-  
ring William Holden, Ernest Borgnine and Robert  
Ryan (505495)79; 5.25-5.55am The Morning  
Show (487344)2.

**SBC**  
As Ca escape: 9.00am Saved by the Bell  
(47079)13; 12.10pm Creepy Crawleys  
(18794)69; 1.40pm Sci Westhorn (503588)1;  
2.40pm Film Return from the Ashes (843441)0;  
5.00-5.15 Lunch Around a Town (762)5; 5.30  
Riverdance - The Show / 7.55pm, 7.00 Pabst  
Cwm (76006)2; 7.25 Y Byddi Ar Bedwair  
(5289)5; 8.00 John J. Hayes Jr. Hy Hanner Corwen  
(5494)9; 8.30pm The Jermaine Jackson Show  
(5051)1; 9.00m (957)78; 9.45 Spqr (94606)2;  
10.45 Fraser (535710); 11.15-12.55am Film  
A Boy and His Dog (461159).

## Year of the Newt William Hartston

It has been a momentous and well-defined year. Indeed, with 75 defining moments compared with only 27 last year, 1995 may fairly be described as the year of defining moments. Or you could call it the Year of the New. We shall come to that later. First, the defining moments. We have had several in Bosnia, almost as many in Ireland, and a not inconsiderable number in both the Conservative and Labour parties. There was even one in the ENO production of *Don Giovanni*.

Our figures are based on a count of occurrences of the phrase "defining moment" in the pages of the *Independent* and *Independent on Sunday* throughout the year, and the comparison with last year shows that 1995 was either a remarkable year or, more likely, that "defining moment" wins the Cliché of the Year award.

However, our primary concern today is not with clichés but with names. For this purpose we have consulted a representative sample of the daily and Sunday press, from the *Sun* to the *Sunday Times*, to see how many times certain names have appeared in 1995 and to assess the trends by comparing the figures with those of 1994.

Table 1 lists the results for the most significant women's names of the year. The figures represent the number of distinct articles in which each name appeared, with the final column giving the percentage change from 1994 to 1995. As is immediately apparent, the most striking features are the huge rise in

Table 1 Women's Names				Table 2 Men's Names			
Name	1994	1995	change	Name	1994	1995	change
Silvana	31	82	+165	Orenthal	5	32	+540
Cherie	980	1550	+58	Ratko	118	541	+358
Divine	250	385	+54	Newt	199	892	+348
Gillian	1845	2835	+47	Slobodan	203	429	+111
Rosemary	1299	1626	+49	Ringo	218	362	+66
Norma	993	1190	+28	Eric	5040	7510	+49
Cynthia	663	790	+13	Hugh	4407	6028	+13
Madonna	1387	1449	+4.5	John	18608	24272	+4.5
Diana	5092	5299	+4.1	Tony	75448	80201	+4.1
Margaret	7831	7454	-4.8	Boris	2326	1787	-4.8
Virginia	4404	4102	-6.9	Boutros	427	309	-6.9
Hillary	916	696	-24	Vladimir	901	634	-24

Silvana and the drop in Hillary. While we should be cautious in extrapolating on the basis of a single year's trend, it is worth mentioning that if these rates are maintained, Silvana will overtake Hillary around the middle of 1997. The slow decline of Margaret and Virginia were, perhaps, only to be expected, but the rise in Madonna is a little surprising.

The large rise in Divine is particularly interesting. It is up by 570 on the previous year, though the word "Brown" was only found in 463 of these. The steady rise in Norma suggests that she could hold off the growing challenge from Cherie for another couple of years.

Men's names (see Table 2) show considerably more volatility with Orenthal multiplying more than sixfold and Ratko and Newt also more than quadrupling in number. Slobodan, Eric and Tony have also had good years, but Vladimir, Boris and Boutros have faded badly. While the women's names, for all their individual performances, changed little in relative order, it is inter-

esting to see Newt storming past all of Boutros, Vladimir, and Ringo; despite the last of these making a considerable comeback.

Table 3 Life-forms			
Beast	1994	1995	change
newt	199	892	+548
Civrus	61	136	+123
ostrich	226	339	+46
pig	2091	2520	+217
giraffe	155	181	+17
virus	1569	1878	+169
goat	8051	8494	+469
mad cow	17	17	0
mad ock	341	325	-4.7
hippo	91	37	-37

Newt also features at the top of our final table of life-forms of the year. Its 348 per cent rise is way ahead of the computer viruses in second place. Pigs, as might be expected in this Chinese Year of the Pig, have also soared ahead, though not nearly as fast as ostriches.

Mad cows are still numerous, but somewhat down on last year. The hippopotamus is increasingly endangered, but it is good to see the aardvark as the one stable feature in these turbulent times.



## New Year's Eve Television and Radio

## RECOMMENDED VIEWING

## Film choice

by James Rampton

Tom Hanks has made something of a specialty out of playing amiable peepholes (*Big*, *Forrest Gump*). He does so once more as a man who falls in love with a mermaid (*The Beach*) in Ron Howard's whimsical fantasy, *Splash* (3.15pm ITV).

Terry Jones is a man of many parts. Among other things, he has directed films (*Monty Python and the Holy Grail*), written a well-regarded book and presented a TV series about the Crusades. He also happens to find the time to pen screenplays, such as *Labyrinth* (3.45pm BBC1), an epic fantasy. Directed by Jim Henson, the film tells the tale of a young girl (Jennifer Connelly) who attempts to rescue her baby brother from Jareth,



They're in the mood for dancing

King of the Goblins (David Bowie). In *The American President*, Michael Douglas displays a keen eye for comedy, but it was as an action man in films like *The Jewel of the Nile* (5.35pm ITV) that he made his name. Lewis Teague's

sequel to *Romancing the Stone* again teams him with bawdy Kathleen Turner, but this time round they fail to gladden.

Taking everyone by surprise, the Australian film *Strictly Ballroom* (left) (8.20pm BBC1) became the sleeper of 1992. On reflection, it's not hard to see why. Baz Luhrmann's debut as director strikes a nice balance between sending up and celebrating a world most of us only previously knew through *Come Dancing*.

No film of a musical is ever wholly going to capture the buzz of the live version, but *South Pacific* (8.30pm C4) makes a respectable stab at it. Joshua Logan's interpretation features Mitzi Gaynor as a nurse who falls for an older man, French planter Rossano Brazzi.

## Television choice

by Gerard Gilbert

"Due to illness", says the BBC press release, "Jack Dee will be unable to join Angus Deayton for his *End of the Year Show*". Well, thank goodness for that. Two practitioners of deadpan plus Richard Wilson: what a gloomy, unexpressive gathering. Dee's place in *The End of the Year Show* (11pm BBC1; BBC2 in Scotland) is taken by someone called "Alexis Sayle", who may or may not be the famous Scouse comedian. Dee's illness was announced on 21 December so either poor of Jack is in a bad way or the show isn't going out live.

When the BBC first screened Louis Malle's 1969 film about India, the Indian government was so angered it expelled the Beeb from the country. It

is the film Malle always said he was proudest of, and earlier this year, the terminally-ill director re-edited this fascinating, self-conscious, sometimes naive journey across the sub-continent and *India* (8.25pm BBC2) is showing the results.

*Screen Two* has a handsome but uninspiring adaptation of Thomas Hardy's *Return of the Native* (right) (9.50pm BBC2), directed by Jack Gold and starring Catherine Zeta Jones as the Wessex girl dying for some excitement. This eventually unravels up in the shape of Clym Yeobright (Ray Stevenson). Clive Owen and Joan Plowright also star.

It's the battle of the bands on Channel 4 and BBC2. *The Third Annual Jools*



Is there life beyond Wessex?

Hootenanny (12am BBC2; not Scotland) boasts Eric Clapton, Dr John Supergrass and the Mike Flower Pop. The White Room: *New Year Special* (11.15pm C4) counters with Oasis, David Bowie, Chris Farlowe and PM Dawn.

## BBC1

- 7.35 **Inspector Clouseau** (Bud Yorkin 1968 US). Alan Arkin steps into Peter Sellers's shoes for an ill-advised outing in Swinging London. Beryl Reid helps out (8.00/8.50).
- 9.10 **News** (5.00/6.48).
- 9.15 **The Big Question**. Iman Khan opens the batting for a new series of chat (5.57/11.41).
- 9.30 **First Light** (5.48/5.51).
- 10.00 **Countryfile** (5.18/5.32).
- 10.30 **El Cid** (Anthony Mann 1961 US). Above-average history epic with Charlton Heston ridding 11th-century Spain of the Moors (8.36/10.28).
- 1.25 **News** (6.16/6.20.54).
- 1.30 **Review of the Year 1995**. John Humphrys and news clips (8.56/2.57).
- 2.45 **EastEnders Omnibus** (S) (9.40/3.55).
- 3.45 **Labyrinth** (Jim Henson 1986 US). An adolescent girl enters a magic kingdom ruled by the Goblin King to rescue her baby brother. Enjoyable enough, mildly imaginative animatronic fantasy (9.23/1.41).
- 5.20 **Black Hearts in Battersea**. New drama series aimed at children and based on Joan Aiken's novel set during the fictional reign of King James III in the early 19th century (8.49/0.78).
- 5.50 **News** (8.72/1.9).
- 6.05 **Local News** (4.49/7.02).
- 6.10 **Songs of Praise** on ice. Hymns from the Ice Arena at Blackpool Pleasure Beach (S) (7.12/9.6).
- 6.45 **Antiques Roadshow**. From Ely Cathedral (S) (7.57/8.0).
- 7.30 **Pie in the Sky**. Returning series for the police inspector-cum-restaurantier (S) (3.50/5.0).
- 8.20 **Strictly Ballroom** (Baz Luhrmann 1992 Aus). Thoroughly charming Aussie comedy-drama about an artificially ambitious ballroom-dancer (Paul Mercurio) determined to try out some unorthodox moves - and only being understood by shy newcomer Tara Morice (S) (8.44/2.57).
- 9.50 **News** (8.10/7.64).
- 10.05 **I Worked with Monocam and Wife...** and **Look What Happened to Me**. Some of the guest stars who have appeared with Monocam and Wife recall their experiences (6.58/0.54).
- 11.00 **The End of the Year Show** with Angus Deayton. With Richard Wilson, Alexis Sayle, Nick Hancock and Lily Savage (includes Big Ben) (S) (2.62/8.9).
- 12.05 **Happy New Year**. Says the Archbishop of Canterbury (5.52/8.17).
- 12.10 **Hogmanay Live**. Gordon Kennedy and Lorraine Kelly in Edinburgh are joined by Gary Glitter, Big Country, Eddi Reader and Al Bino (8.30/3.53).
- 1.00 **Carry on Camping** (Gerald Thomas 1969 UK). What - you're still sober? (9.75/1.24).
- 2.25 **Weather** (2.33/7.10). To 2.30am.

## BBC2

- 7.30 **Children's BBC**. The Adventures of Skippy. 7.55 Playdays. 8.10 Babar. 8.35 Jackanory. 9.00 Bites. 9.15 The Curious Case of Dr Hertz Van Rental. 9.40 Phantom 2040. 10.05 Blue Peter - the Best Bits. 10.35 Orange Hill. 11.00 Newsround. Review of the Year.
- 11.30 **The Royal Institute Christmas Lectures** - Planet Earth, an Explorer's Guide (S) (8.03/2.5).
- 12.30 **Rugby Special** (S) (8.23/0.6).
- 1.30 **Gay Purr-ee** (Abe Levitow 1962 US). Sophisticated cartoon musical about a country cat's adventures in the big city. Judy Garland lent her voice (8.03/8.51).
- 2.50 **Pal Joey** (George Sidney 1957 US). Curate's egg of a screen adaptation of the Rodgers and Hart musical, with Frank Sinatra as the nightclub singer vacillating between big-eyed Kim Novak and experienced rival Rita Hayworth (5.32/8.78).
- 4.40 **Notes from a Diva: Cardiff Singer of the World**. Six singers from this year's competition have a masterclass from Romanian mezzo Ileana Cotrubas, Finnish baritone Tom Krause and Australian coloratura soprano, Dame Joan Sutherland (S) (8.77/9.43).
- 5.30 **Wildlife on Two** (S) (4.31).
- 6.00 **The Wolves of Willoughby Chase** (Stuart Orme 1989 UK). To complement their new children's series starting over on BBC1, the Beeb screens this disappointing version of Joan Aiken's other classic story with a miscast Stephanie Beacham, helped out by Mel Smith, Geraldine James and a pre-Bubble Jane Horrocks (4.22/1.9).
- 7.30 **Video Nation** - Best of 95 (5.33/8.21).
- 8.10 **Close Up**. John Lindsay chooses scenes from *Annie Hall* and *Jaws* (9.22/2.0).
- 8.25 **Fine Cut**. Louis Malle's *India*. Edited by the terminally-ill Louis Malle, this is a part reworking of his acclaimed 1970 travelogue about India (S) (7.34/2.51).
- 9.50 **Screen Two: Return of the Native**. Adapted from Thomas Hardy's novel, with Catherine Zeta Jones as Wessex girl Eustacia Vye and Clive Owen as Damon Wildeve (4.05/7.8).
- 11.30 **TOTP2 Brit Pop**. Then and Now (S) (8.89/8.6).
- 12.00 **Third Annual Jools Hootenanny**. With Eric Clapton, Dr John, Supergrass and Alanis Morissette (2.32/7.91).
- 1.15 **Imagine**. John Lennon (Andrew Solt 1988 US). Surely even the most obsessed Lennon fan has been satiated by the excellent *Beatles Anthology*. If not, this documentary is based around the 1971 recording of the title song (9.29/7.3).
- 2.55 **Weather** (7.64/1.26). To 3.05am.

## ITV/London

- 6.00 **GMTV**. 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News and Sport. 7.00 The Sunday Programme (8.21/6.2).
- 8.00 **Disney Adventures** (S) (5.65/0.41).
- 9.25 **Big Foot** (Danny Huston 1987 US). Concluding the Disney adventure in which two boys, camping in the mountains of Oregon, encounter a huge ape-like creature (1.92/1.08).
- 10.15 **Link** (S) (7.05/3.78).
- 10.30 **This Sunday**. 11.00 Morning Worship from St Osmond's, Derby (S) (4.07/3).
- 12.30 **The Munters Today** (S) (2.81/6.15).
- 12.55 **Local News**. Weather (1.28/2.78).
- 1.00 **News**. Weather (4.83/2.58).
- 1.10 **Cartoon Time** (4.83/2.74).
- 1.25 **Knightbridge 2000** (Tom Hinky 1991 US). Feature-length adventure for Michael Knight and his car KITT. Stars a fully-clothed David Hasselhoff (6.56/4.78).
- 3.15 **Splash** (Ron Howard 1984 US). Warm romantic comedy in which Tom Hanks falls in love with the mermaid who saved him from drowning as a boy (Daryl Hannah) (S) (8.75/4.31).
- 5.15 **Local News**. Weather (6.12/3.44).
- 5.35 **The Jewel of the Nile** (Lewis Teague 1985 US). Lesser sequel to *Romancing the Stone* reunites Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas (4.65/4.93).
- 7.30 **You've Been Framed** (S) (3.06).
- 8.00 **Agatha Christie's Poirot: Death in the Clouds**. Recycled David Suchet yarn as the Belgian sleuth wraps his brain around an ingenious murder committed on an aeroplane flight from Paris to London (7.98/6).
- 10.00 **The Beatles Anthology**. The last instalment of this thrilling official history of the mop-tops finds their hair growing ever longer. Let it Be being recorded and Yoko Ono appearing ever more often (6.49/3.1).
- 11.00 **News**. Weather (1.45/4.7).
- 11.20 **Swing Shift** (Jonathan Demme 1984 US). Romantic comedy in which married housewife Goldie Hawn takes factory work in World War Two and finds love with Kurt Russell. The original version, reshaped on Goldie Hawn's insistence, was apparently a minor masterpiece (8.13/2.5).
- 11.55 **The Year** (9.53/2.19).
- 12.05 **Swing Shift**. Continued (7.93/1.33).
- 1.25 **Claws!** (Richard Bensch 1977 US). A giant bear terrorises an Alaskan community (8.21/6.23).
- 3.10 **Happy Up or I'll Be Thirty** (Joseph Jacoby 1972 US). Mid-life crisis comedy (4.26/4.68).
- 4.45 **Come Out Fighting** (William Beaudine 1945 US). Comedy featuring the East Side Kids (1.00/2.91). To 5.55am.

## Channel 4

- 6.10 **Blitz** (R) (5.68/0.21).
- 7.05 **The Herbs** (R) (9.56/9.96).
- 7.20 **Lift Off** (S) (1.22/0.67).
- 7.50 **The Great Bang** (S) (7.56/0.70).
- 8.05 **Hong Kong Phooey** (2.54/4.74).
- 8.30 **Where on Earth Is Carmen Sandiego?** (S) (7.98/7.64).
- 8.55 **Erasmus** (S) (7.90/5.89).
- 9.20 **Running the Halls** (R) (S) (8.10/8.78).
- 9.45 **The Pink Panther** (S) (8.39/8.61).
- 10.15 **Saved by the Bell: The New Class** (2.30/9.74).
- 10.40 **Rocko's Modern Life** (S) (5.53/6.83).
- 11.05 **Elephant Boy** (Robert Flaherty/Zoltan Korda 1937 UK). Flaherty directed the Indian location footage in this once-admired Kipling adaptation that introduced Sabu to the world (5.87/1.04).
- 12.35 **The Thief of Baghdad** (Michael Powell, Tim Whelan, Ludwig Berger, Zoltan Korda 1940 UK). Alexander Korda's magical, hugely ambitious slice of *The Arabian Nights* - begun in Blitzed-out Britain and completed in Hollywood. Sabu, with the help of magnificent djinni Rex Ingram, foils wicked Grand Vizier Conrad Veidt and restores Prince John Justin to the throne of Baghdad (6.16/2.77).
- 2.35 **4 Goes to Glynedebourne: The Makropulos Case**. Stunning, justly celebrated production of Janacek's opera from this year's Glynedebourne, directed by Nikolaus Lehnhoff, and starring Anja Silja (S) (1.21/2.44).
- 4.25 **Battle for the Planet of the Apes** (J Lee Thompson 1973 US). Last and least of the chimp sequels (3.42/1.03).
- 6.00 **The Persuaders** (5.69/5.61).
- 7.00 **Riverdance** - the Show. Highlights from the hugely popular Irish dance stage show - the choreographer's answer to synchronised swimming, according to some (S) (4.54/3.1).
- 8.30 **Strictly Ballroom** (Joshua Logan 1958 US). Slow-moving adaptation of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical. Mitzi Gaynor is the naive American nurse on a South Sea island who falls for widowed Rossano Brazzi (4.55/1.74).
- 11.15 **The White Room: New Year Special**. The stripped-down music show, featuring live sets from Oasis, David Bowie, PM Dawn and Chris Farlowe, the British R&B singer of the 1960s. Plus, highlights from the last series (1.67/1.6).
- 12.50 **American Football: The Road to Superbowl** (6.01/3.57).
- 2.10 **The Best Specials** (R) (S) (6.45/1.72).
- 3.10 **The Best Specials** (R) (S) (3.03/0.04).
- 4.05 **The World of Hammer** (R) (7.88/9.62). To 4.35am.

## ITV/Regions

- ARL**  
As London except: 12.30pm Riddle Me This. Why? (8.21/6.2). 1.00 Anglia News (8.25/3.08). 1.10 Film: *Return of the Native* (8.25/3.08). 1.20 News. Weather (1.28/2.78). 1.30 Film: *Time* (2.54/4.74). 1.40 The South Bank Show (7.52/4.40). 5.20 Anglia News and Weather (1.25/3.08). 11.00 ITV News & Weather (1.25/3.08). 11.20 Film: *Splash* (8.75/4.31). 11.30 Film: *Where on Earth Is Carmen Sandiego?* (7.98/7.64). 11.40 News. Weather (1.25/3.08). 11.50 Film: *Erasmus* (7.90/5.89). 12.00 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 12.10 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 12.20 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 12.30 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 12.40 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 12.50 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.00 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.10 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.20 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.30 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.40 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 1.50 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.00 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.10 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.20 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.30 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.40 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 2.50 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.00 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.10 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.20 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.30 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.40 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 3.50 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.00 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.10 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.20 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.30 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.40 Film: *Blitz* (5.68/0.21). 4.50 Film: 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